

KIRKMAN • OTTLEY • CRABTREE

INVINCIBLE



VOLUME EIGHT

MY FAVORITE MARTIAN



image® COMICS PRESENTS

INVINCIBLE™

MY FAVORITE MARTIAN



CREATED BY
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& **CORY WALKER**

image®



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colorist
**BILL
CRABTREE**

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**RUS
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cover
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& BILL CRABTREE**

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INTRODUCTION

When *Invincible* first hit the stands in early 2002, I remember picking it up off the shelves at my local comic shop, and then setting it right back down. I said to myself "BAH, who needs ANOTHER super-hero book anyway?!" And I passed on it.

I hear stories similar to this all the time, a friend of yours bugs the crap out of you until you **FINALLY** give in and read this book they keep talking about, but in your mind you **KNOW** you won't like it because you already have your fill of Super-heroics from the big two companies who have characters you **KNOW** from your childhood. Why would you want something completely **NEW**?!? It's hard for you to believe that a **NEW** superhero will be as good or better than one who's been around for 30-40 years. Then you read *Invincible*, you keep asking for more and more until you are completely addicted and caught up with the series, you write in to Robert Kirkman asking over and over when the new issue is coming out, you pray he will produce a toy line and movies and glow-in-the dark *Invincijammies*. (which you gotta admit would be **AWESOME**!)

So anyway, I hear that quite a bit, and it's funny that a new comic with new characters has such a hard time starting off - which *Invincible* did. It was a rocky start.

November 2003, I was trying out to be the regular artist on *Noble Causes*. It didn't work out. Shortly after that, I get an e-mail from Robert Kirkman. He asked if I wanted to do a fill-in issue for *Invincible*. I said **YES**! I always wanted to draw for Image. I didn't care what book I drew, I just wanted a job in comics. He sent me the whole story and after I read the first 7 issues, I had big time regrets putting *Invincible* back on the shelf a year earlier. It was some of the freshest super-hero stuff I've read in a **LONG** time - extremely well written stories with a great sense of humor and art from Cory Walker that was so clean and structured and technically perfect that it was intimidating for me to take over and attempt to fill his gigantic shoes.

I did my best to not worry about the great artist I was following and jumped right into the work and in my excitement. I finished it as fast as I could. It took me a little over 2 weeks for issue 8, which looking back on it now was **WAY** too fast. Yeah, not my best work. Sigh. But hey, this was my first full monthly comic I'd ever drawn. What artist likes their first issue? Luckily, I got to stay on as the full time artist for *Invincible*. Of course I didn't think it would be that long of a run since the book had the reputation of being late and sales were dropping fast. There was talk of cancellation a few times.

Robert and I kept the book on track and Robert got some good gigs at Marvel and became more known, the fact that he is just a great writer is what made people come back for more and spread the word, so the numbers started rising. And I've been drawing it monthly (Give or take a week or two) ever since.

My plan wasn't to be drawing Invincible for this long. I mean it seems like it's abnormal to stay on a book for long periods of time these days, especially for new artists. I figured I'd get a nice 15 or 20 issue run under my belt and see if I can bolt over to the big two companies and do some classic superhero work like I used to dream of as a kid. But as you all probably know, this Invincible stuff is addictive, right when the issue is over you want another one. Right?

Well it's also addictive for me to draw it.

I can't even imagine leaving. It'd almost be like leaving my family. I draw these characters every day, I help design new ones, I give them motion and make them feel, I put my blood, sweat, and tears into them. Okay, that's not true at all, I sit all day drawing so there is no sweating taking place. I don't shed tears, I am a macho manly man after all, and I only bled ONCE after I accidentally stabbed my finger with a quill pen shoving ink into my finger. I still have the little dot tattoo with me to this day. Okay, I MIGHT have shed a tear or two after that, it kinda hurt.

But my point is I love this stuff. I love it because I think Invincible makes comics fun again. It's truly the kind of comic I want to work on. I'm glad I can be a part of it, glad I get to draw it everyday and create new worlds and aliens and spaceships and design new characters with Robert.

I'll be drawing Invincible for quite a long time. I can't promise I'll be on the book forever, but for now you're stuck with me.

Ryan Ottley
2007

You all know who Ryan is, and if you don't, you should pay attention to the credits page. Ryan is slowly approaching 40 consecutive issues as artist of this series. He doesn't know it yet, but he will definitely be on this book forever. Not as long as the series lasts, either... actually FOREVER.

CHAPTER ONE



AN UNDISCLOSED
LOCATION IN UTAH.

THE SECRET MOUNTAIN
BASE OF THE GUARDIANS
OF THE GLOBE.

I JUST--UGH--
I CAN'T BELIEVE
THEY'RE GETTING
MARRIED.

DON'T LET IT UPSET YOU,
MAN. THEY'RE IN LOVE.
IT'S A GREAT THING WHEN
TWO PEOPLE FIND
EACH OTHER.

I'M HAPPY
FOR THE
IMMORTAL AND
DUPLI-KATE.

WHATEVER.

I DON'T KNOW--I
JUST DON'T GET WHAT
HE SEES IN HER. SHE
HARDLY EVER TALKS
AND ALL SHE EVER
WANTS TO DO
IS--

YOU
KNOW.

ISN'T THAT
WHAT YOU
SAW IN
HER?

WELL YEAH--
BUT I WASN'T
GOING TO
MARRY
HER.

NO WAY...
IF I WAS
GOING TO MARRY
SOMEONE... THEY'D
HAVE TO BE
MORE LIKE...

...EVE.

OH, PLEASE
DON'T START
ON THAT
AGAIN.

I
HEARD
HOW THAT
ALL WENT
DOWN.

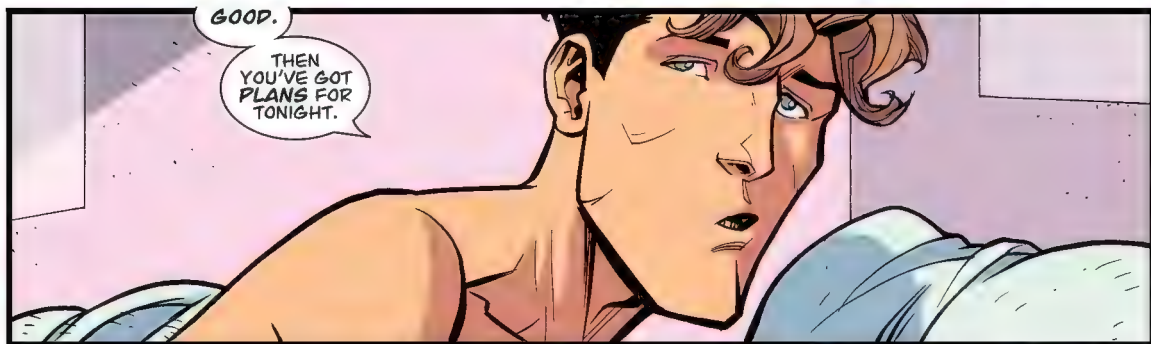
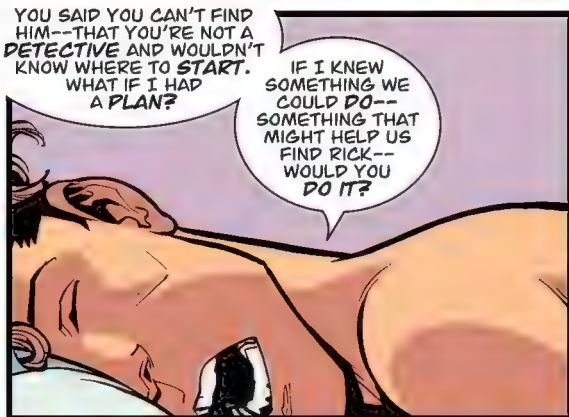
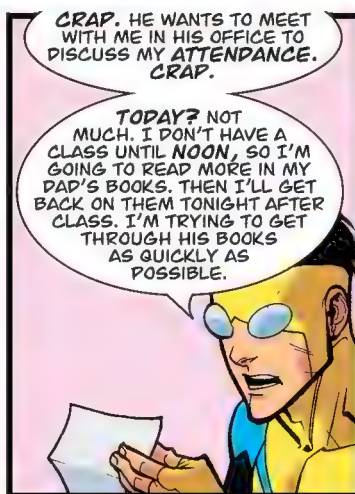
OKAY,
FINE--I'LL
ADMIT I
MADE A
MIS--

DUTY
CALLS!



WY92





FOOLS!!

YOU SOUGHT TO IMPRISON ME?! MY POWER CANNOT BE CONTAINED!!

DOC SEISMIC COMMANDS THE LEGIONS OF UNDEREARTH!! MY TIME UNDERGROUND ALLOWED ME TO BECOME THE RULER OF ALL DIRT DWELLERS!

FOOLS!!

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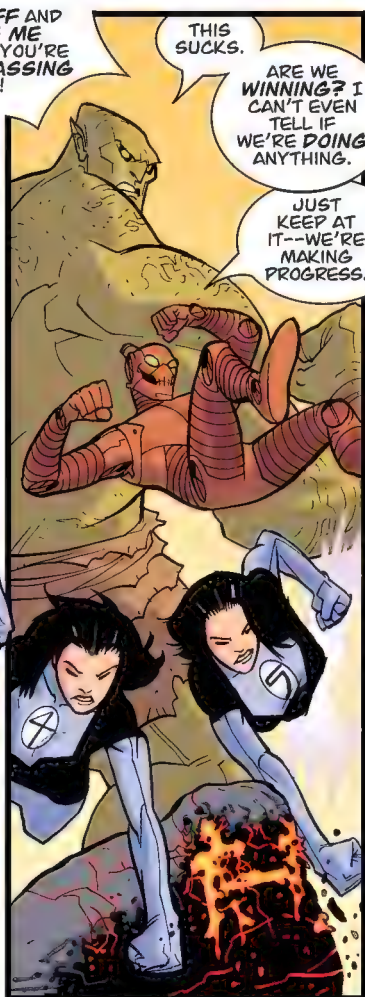
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MY POWER CANNOT BE CONTAINED!!

FOOLS!!

DOC SEISMIC COMMANDS THE LEGIONS OF UNDEREARTH!! MY TIME UNDERGROUND ALLOWED ME TO BECOME THE RULER OF ALL DIRT DWELLERS!

YOU SOUGHT TO IMPRISON ME?! MY POWER CANNOT BE CONTAINED!!



I HAVE NOTHING TO PROVE HERE! KILLING EVERY ONE OF YOU WOULD BRING ME NO MEASURE OF JOY!

HEAR ME, MINIONS! OUR TIME HERE IS DONE!

DIVE!!

THEY'RE ESCAPING? I MEAN--THAT SUCKS AND ALL BUT--WHATEVER.

LESS BROKEN BONES FOR ME.

YOU ARE THE WORST SUPERHERO EVER.



WE'RE NOT STOPPING. WE NEED TO PURSUE HIM. HE SIMPLY CAN'T BE ALLOWED TO ESCAPE.

WE'LL SEND A PROBE DOWN THE TUNNEL TO TRACK THEM. WE'LL BE ABLE TO FIND HIM--HE WON'T GET AWAY.

I'M MORE CONCERNED WITH THE SUPER VILLAINS THAT WERE LET LOOSE DURING DOC SEISMIC'S ESCAPE.

HM. LOOKS LIKE ALL OF THEM HAVE ALREADY ESCAPED.



UM... NOT ALL OF THEM.

I'D KINDA LIKE TO TURN MYSELF IN.

REALLY?



NO--NOT
REALLY.

I'M JUST
KIDDING.

BUT I WAS
ABLE
TO POSE AS ONE OF
THOSE **MAGMANITES**
AND FOLLOW THEM
DOWN THAT HOLE AND
NAB **THIS GUY**.

THAT'S
COOL,
RIGHT?

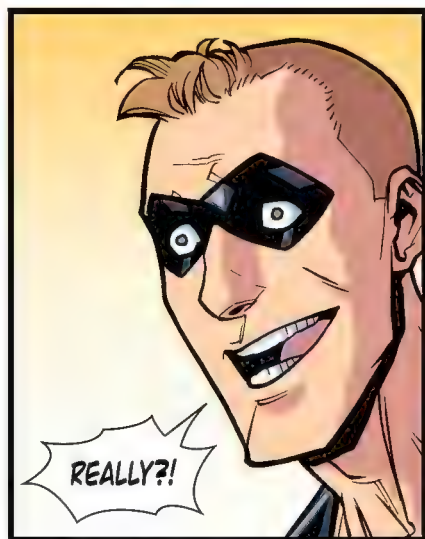


NICE WORK,
STRANGER. I'M
IMPRESSED AND
THAT DOESN'T
HAPPEN OFTEN.
FEEL PROUD.

ARE YOU
LOOKING FOR
WORK? WE'VE GOT
ROOM FOR YOU IN
THE **GUARDIANS
OF THE
GLOBE**.



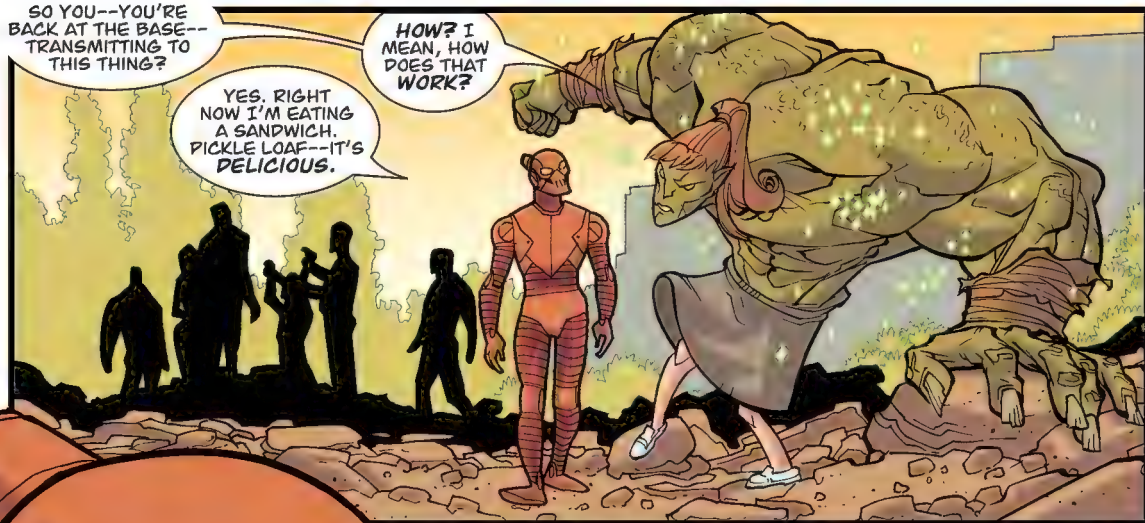
REALLY?!



SO YOU--YOU'RE BACK AT THE BASE--TRANSMITTING TO THIS THING?

YES. RIGHT NOW I'M EATING A SANDWICH. PICKLE LOAF--IT'S DELICIOUS.

HOW? I MEAN, HOW DOES THAT WORK?



BEFORE I WAS IN MY NEW BODY--I LIVED IN A TANK OF FLUIDS THAT KEPT THE OUTSIDE AIR FROM AGITATING MY DELICATE SKIN, AS YOU ALREADY KNOW. THAT TANK HAD AN APPARATUS THAT TRANSMITTED MY THOUGHTS INTO THIS CONSTRUCT.

WHEN I MADE THE REX CLONE I INHABIT NOW, I INSERTED MACHINERY INTO THE BRAIN SO THAT BODY COULD CONTROL THE CONSTRUCT WITHOUT ANY ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT.

IT'S MUCH EASIER NOW.

I WAS GIFTED WITH PROFOUND INTELLECT, AS I'M SURE YOU'RE ALREADY AWARE. IT'S A SIMPLE TASK FOR ME TO PARTITION OFF MY THOUGHTS AND CONTROL TWO BODIES DOING TWO SEPARATE TASKS AT ONCE.

I EVEN SEE IN DOUBLE VISION. WHICH, I'LL ADMIT, TOOK A LONG TIME TO GET USED TO.

THAT'S ALL VERY... INTERESTING.

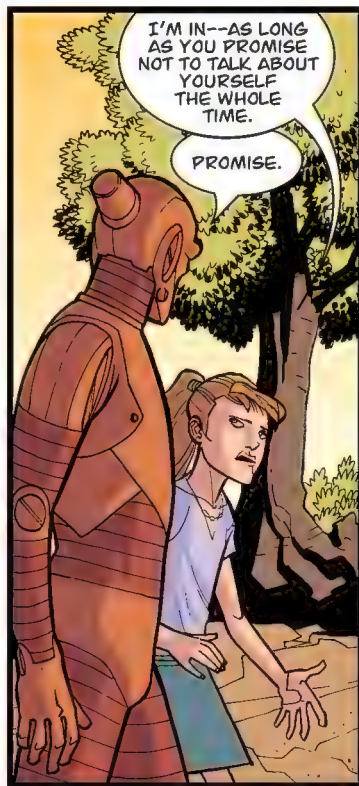
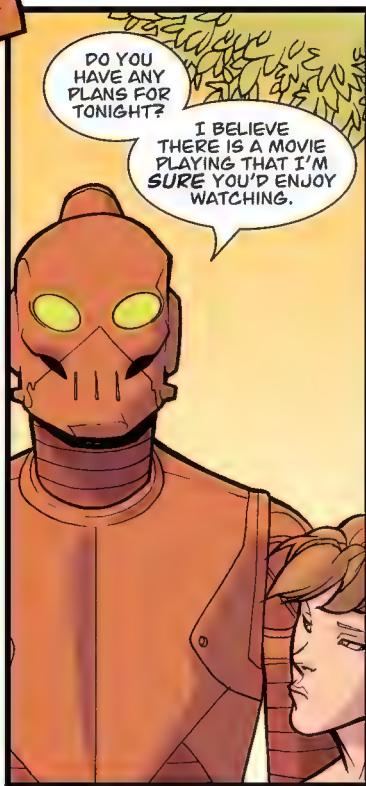
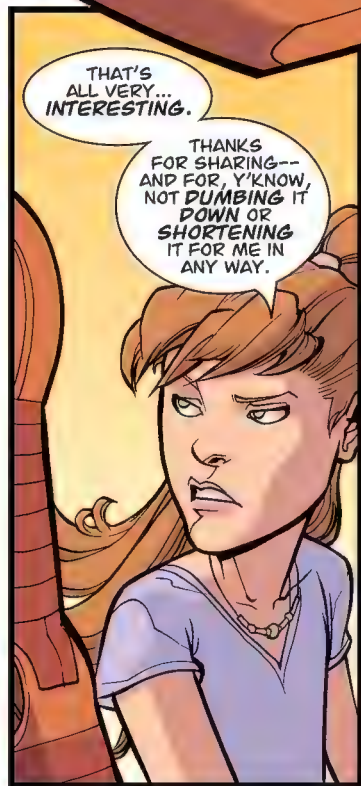
THANKS FOR SHARING-- AND FOR, Y'KNOW, NOT DUMBING IT DOWN OR SHORTENING IT FOR ME IN ANY WAY.

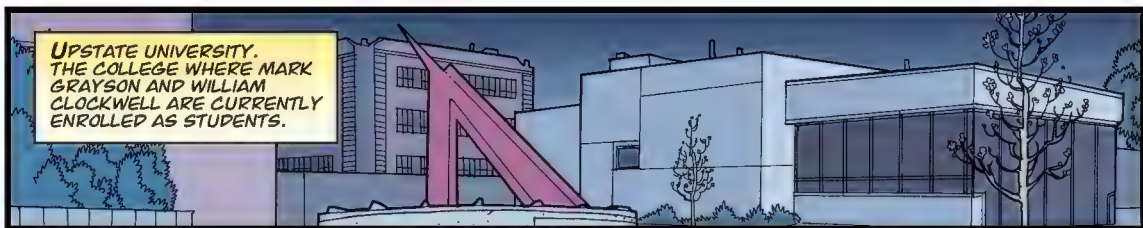
DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS FOR TONIGHT?

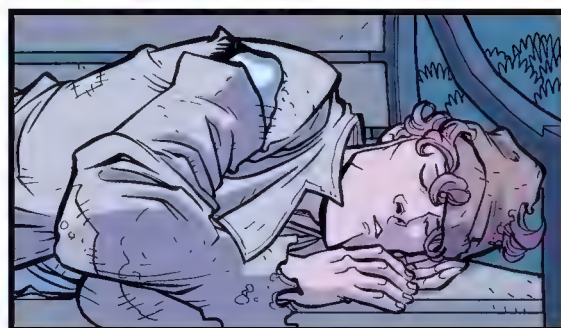
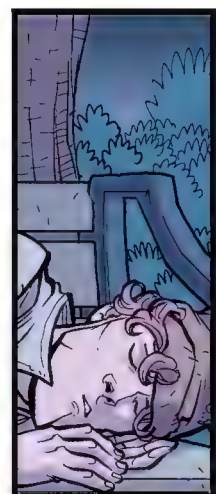
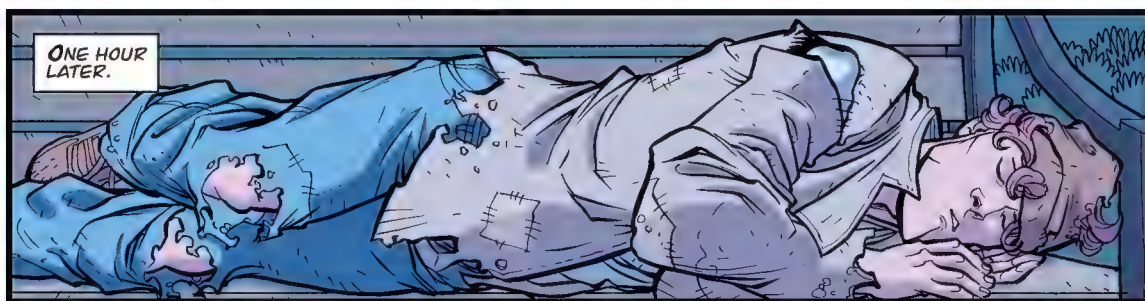
I BELIEVE THERE IS A MOVIE PLAYING THAT I'M SURE YOU'D ENJOY WATCHING.

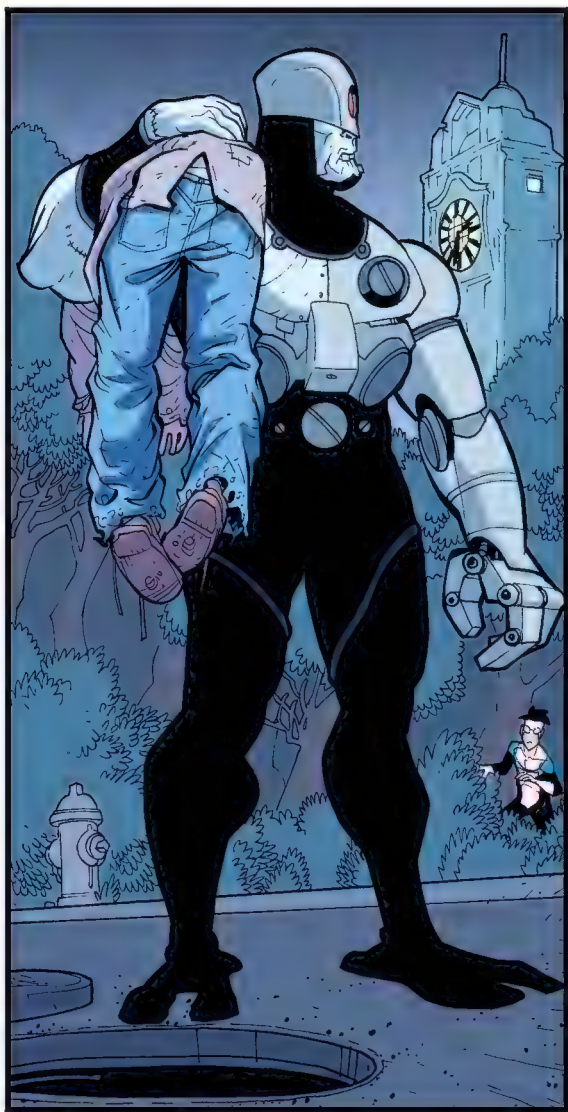
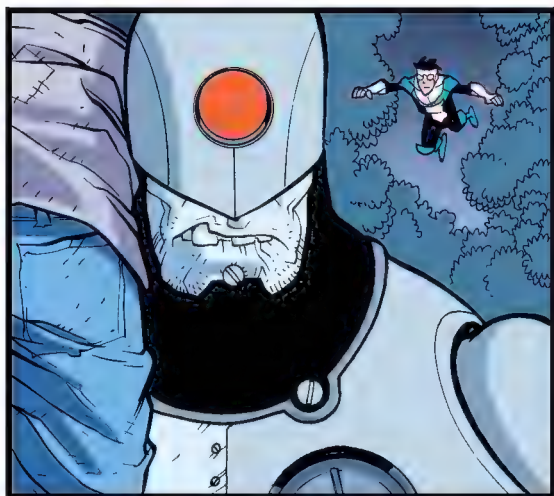
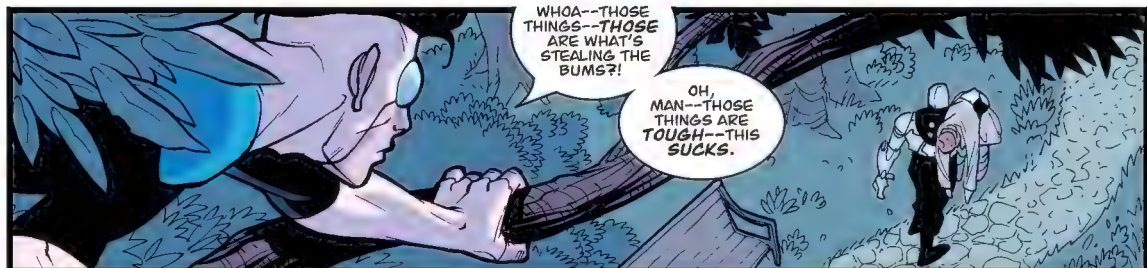
I'M IN--AS LONG AS YOU PROMISE NOT TO TALK ABOUT YOURSELF THE WHOLE TIME.

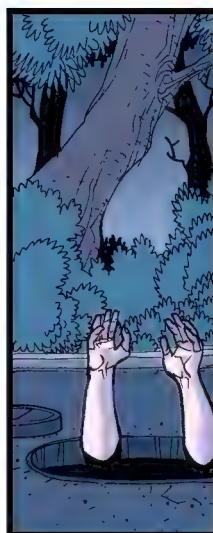
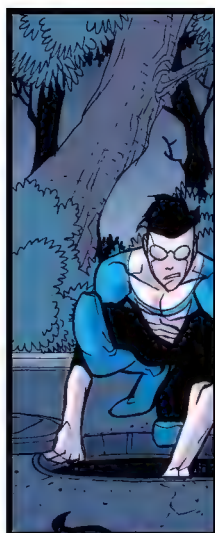
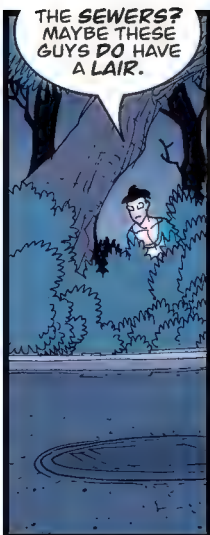
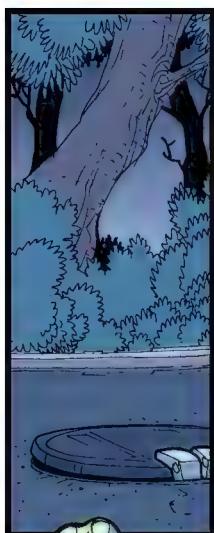
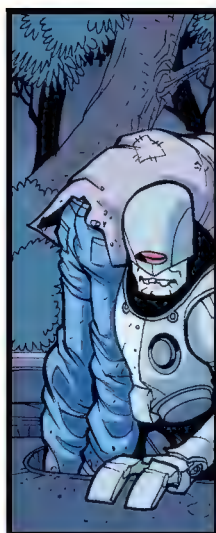
PROMISE.









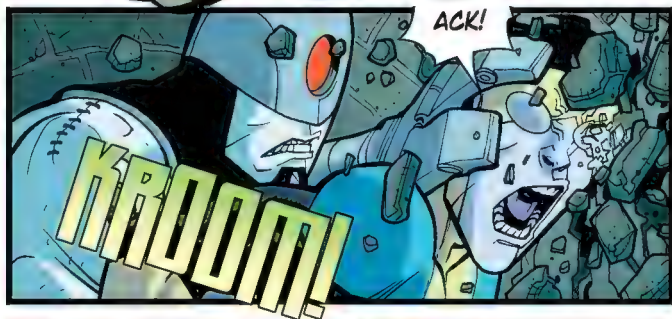
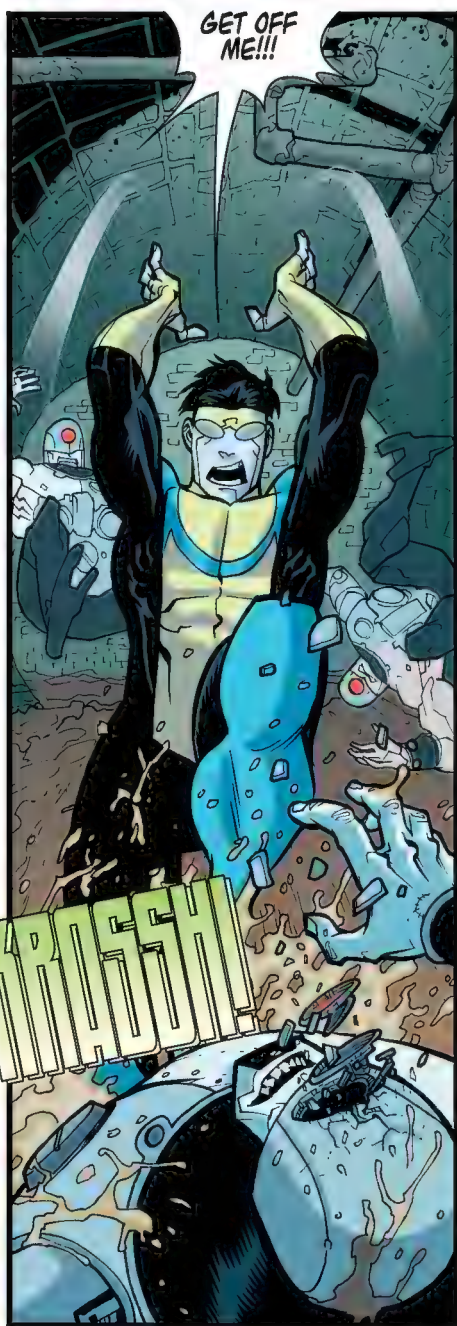


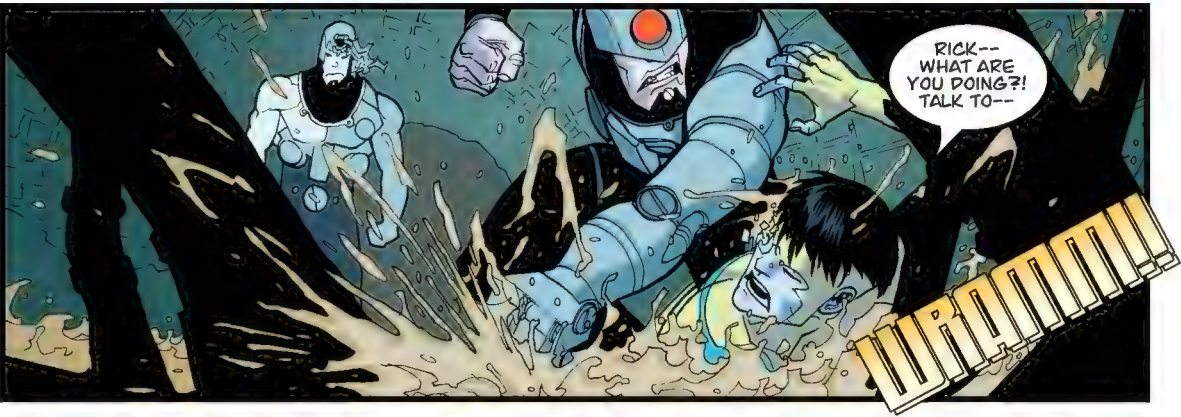
WHOA
HEY--WHAT
GIVES?!

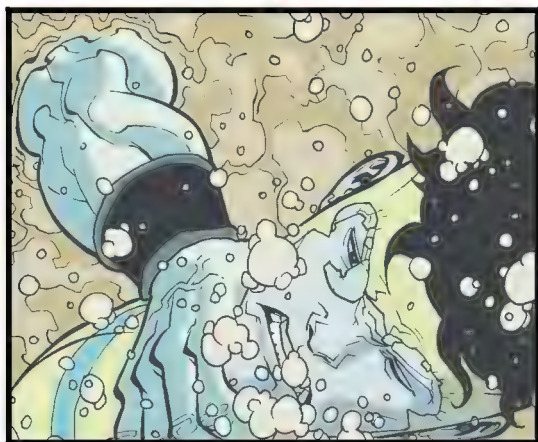
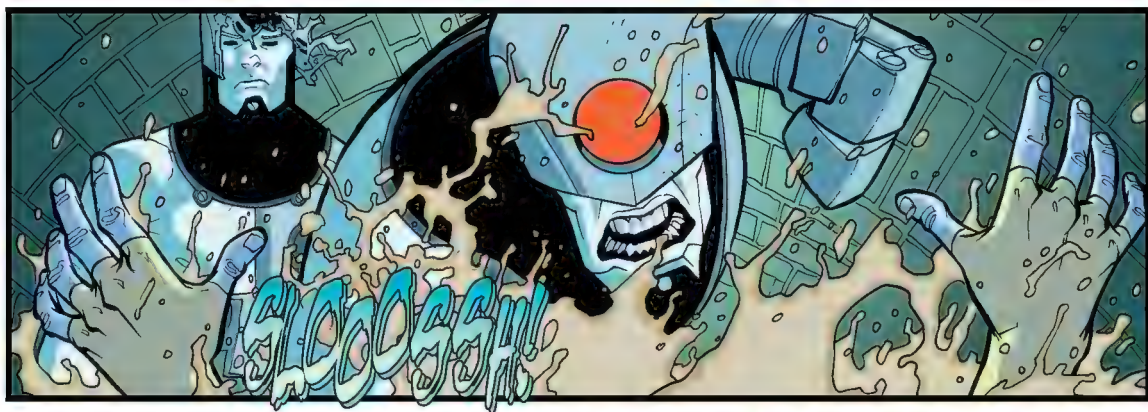


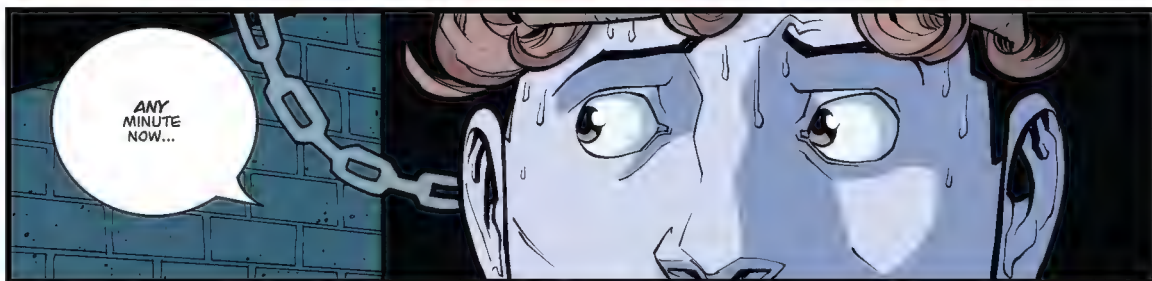
MARK!!





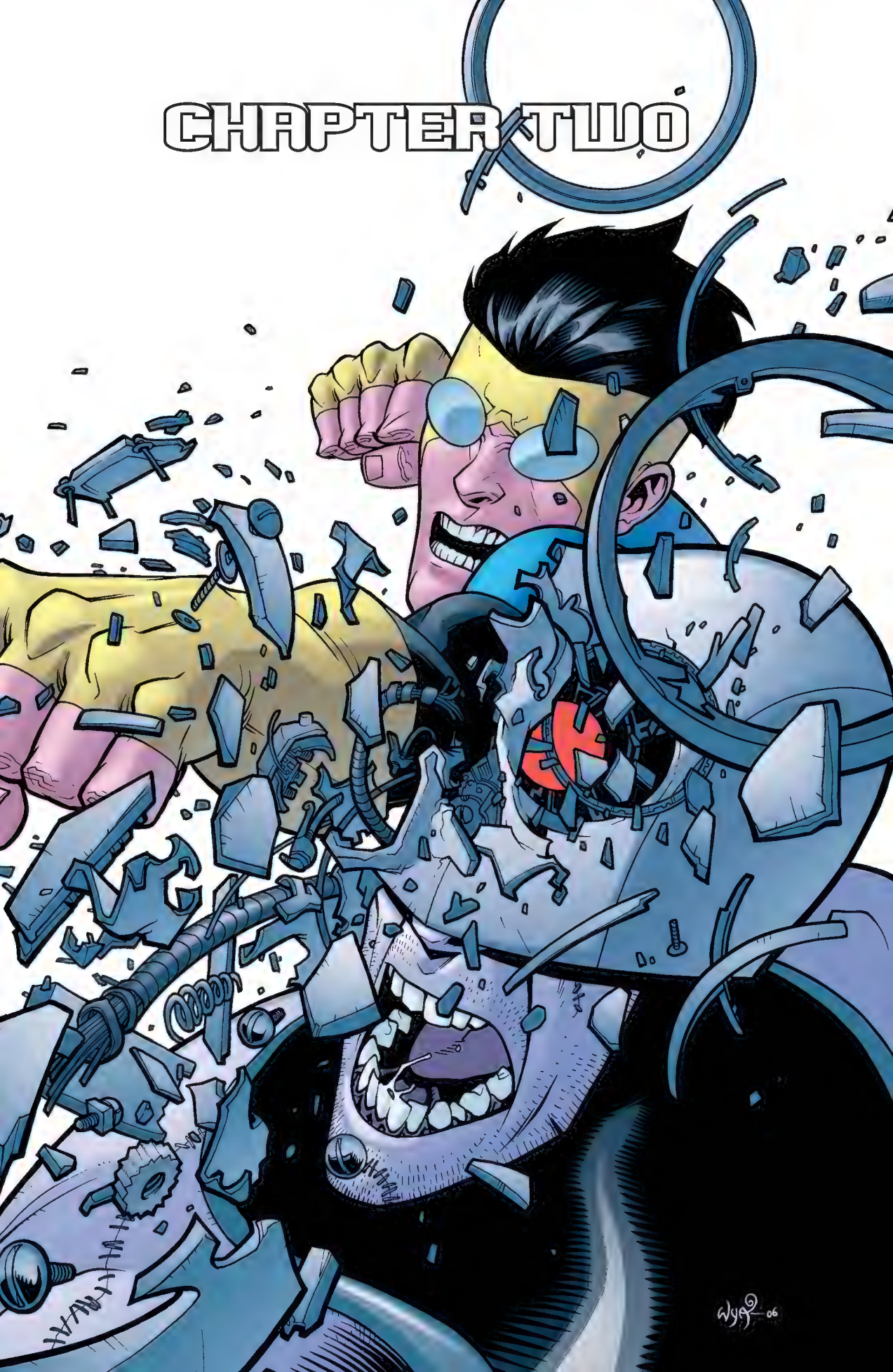


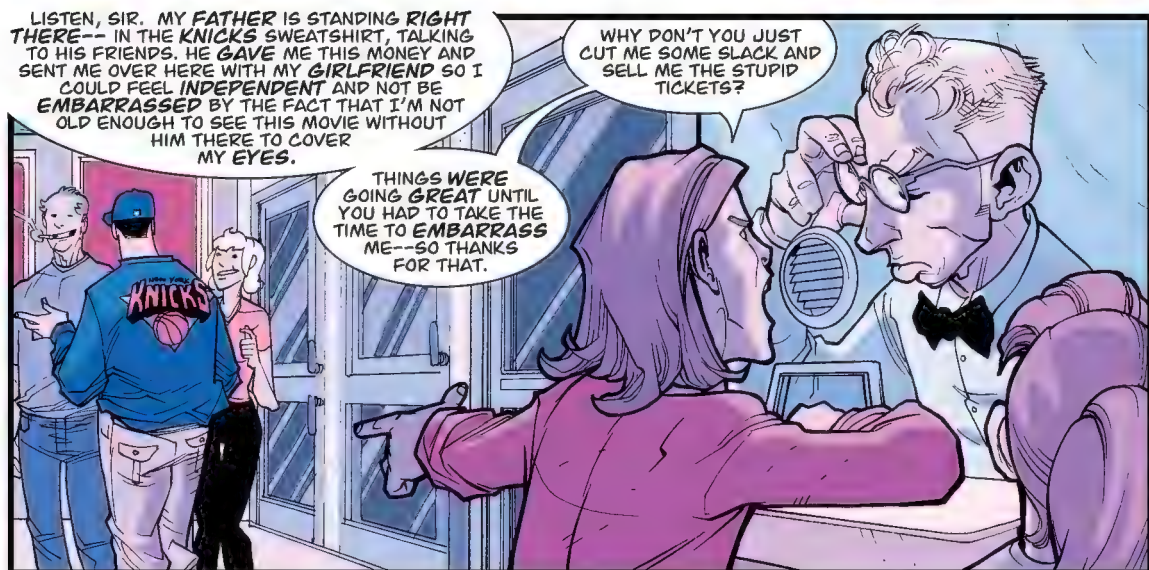
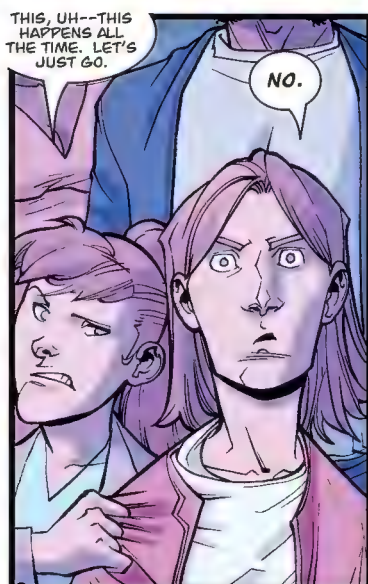
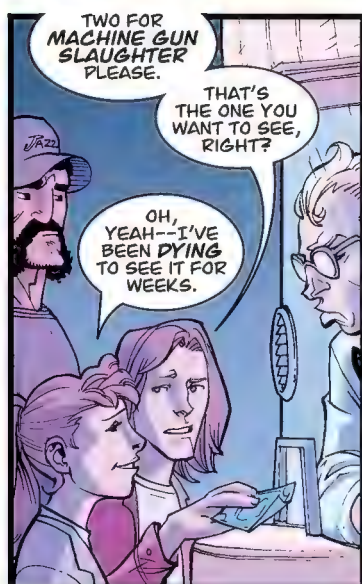
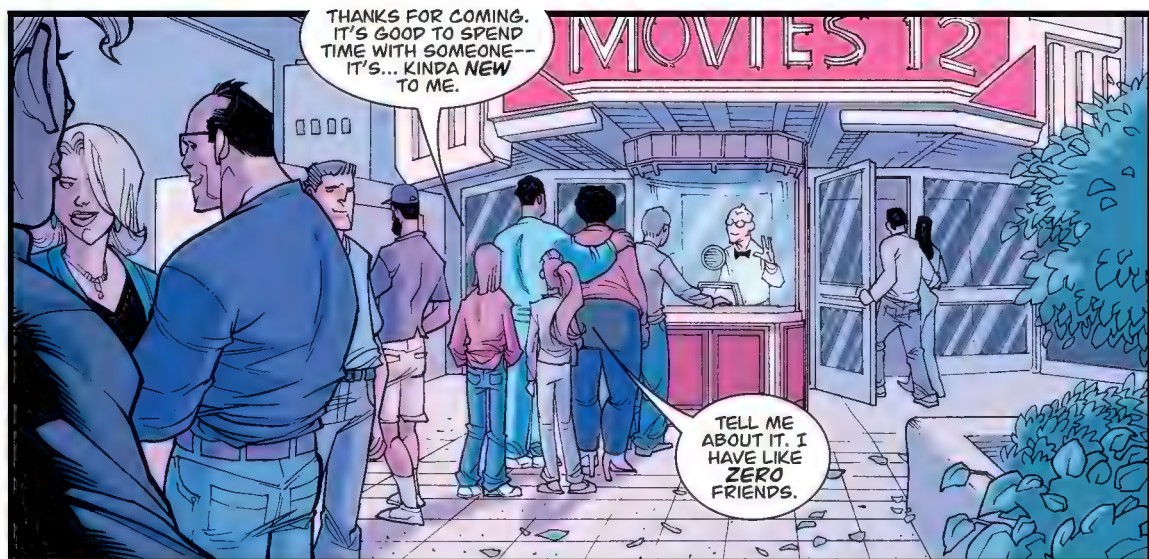


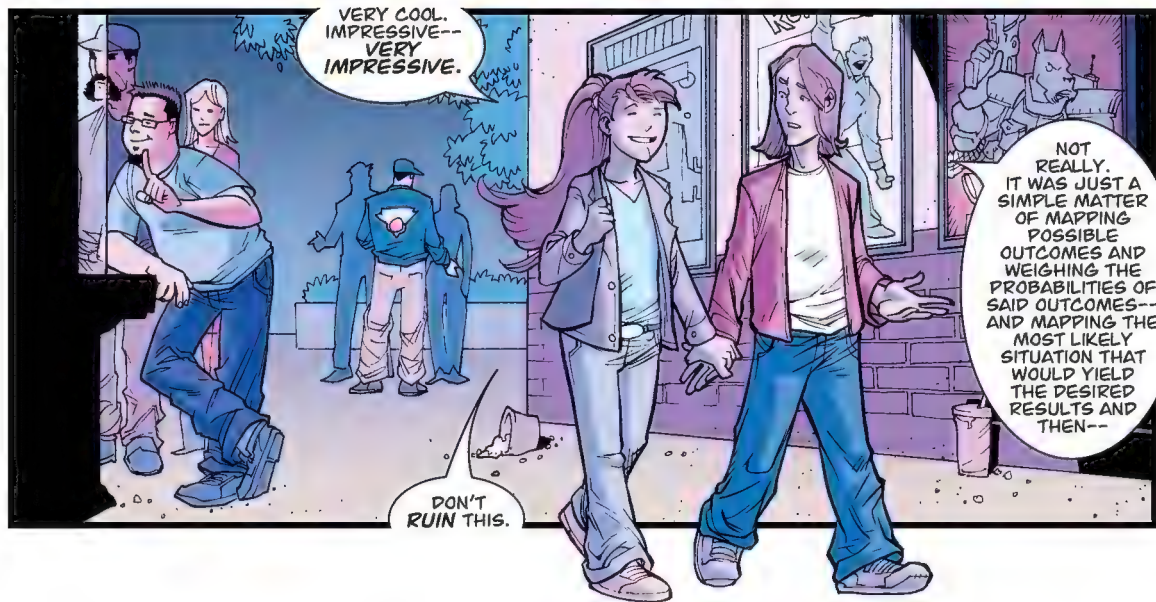
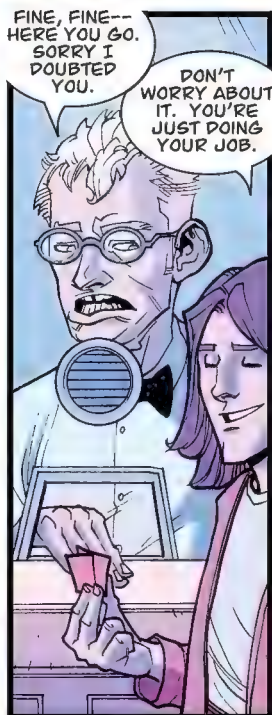




CHAPTER TWO







ANY MINUTE NOW...
HE'S GOING TO
TOTALLY COME
BUSTING THROUGH
THAT WALL AND
SAVE ME...



...



I'M
SCREWED.



YES, BUT
IT'S FOR
A GOOD
CAUSE.

THIS
WILL KEEP
YOU IMMOBILE
WHILE I SEVER
YOUR VOCAL CORDS.
I WOULDN'T WANT
YOUR SQUIRMING
TO CAUSE ME TO
PIERCE YOUR
JUGULAR OR
ANYTHING.

I'D PUMP
YOU FULL OF
PAIN-KILLERS SO
YOU WOULDN'T HAVE
TO SCREAM SO MUCH
IN THE FIRST PLACE
BUT FRANKLY THIS IS
INFINITELY CHEAPER
AND I'M ON A
COLLEGE STUDENT'S
BUDGET.



MARK!!

THIS
GUY IS
CRAZY!!
SAVE
ME!!



MARK!!

WHO'S
MARK?

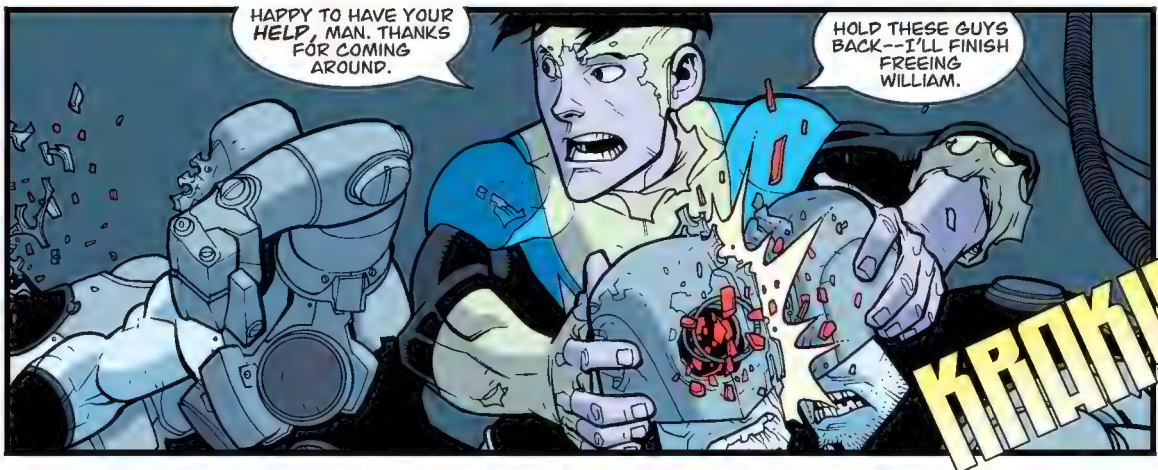
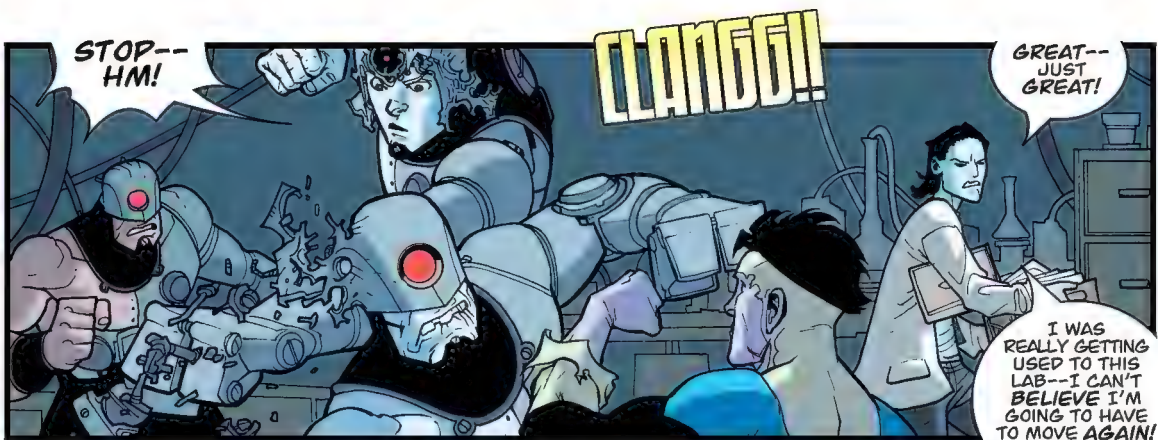




BROOKROOM!!!











SOME TIME LATER.

I'M
SORRY--I
LOST IT--THAT
GUY--THE THINGS
HE DID. I JUST
LOST IT.

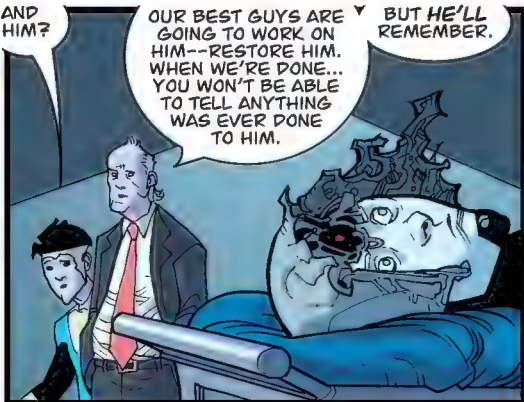
IT'S OKAY.
YOU DID GOOD
HERE. YOU
SAVED THESE
PEOPLE. YOU
DID YOUR
JOB.

JUST
DON'T FORGET
WHAT HAPPENED
THE LAST TIME
YOU LOST YOUR
TEMPER.



WHAT ABOUT
WILLIAM--WHY
ARE YOU TAKING
HIM WITH
YOU?

HE'S BEEN
INJECTED WITH AN
UNKNOWN TOXIN--IT
SEEMS TO BE WEARING
OFF, BUT WE WANT TO
RUN SOME TESTS ON HIM,
MAKE SURE THERE
AREN'T ANY SIDE-EFFECTS.



AND
HIM?

OUR BEST GUYS ARE
GOING TO WORK ON
HIM--RESTORE HIM.
WHEN WE'RE DONE...
YOU WON'T BE ABLE
TO TELL ANYTHING
WAS EVER DONE
TO HIM.

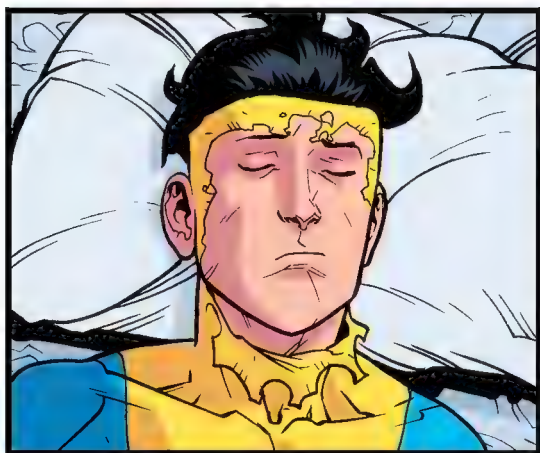
BUT HE'LL
REMEMBER.

I JUST--
I FEEL
TERRIBLE
ABOUT ALL
THIS.



YOU'VE
BEEN UP ALL
NIGHT, KID.
THERE'S NOTHING
YOU CAN DO HERE.
GO HOME--GET
SOME REST.

YEAH,
YOU'RE
RIGHT.



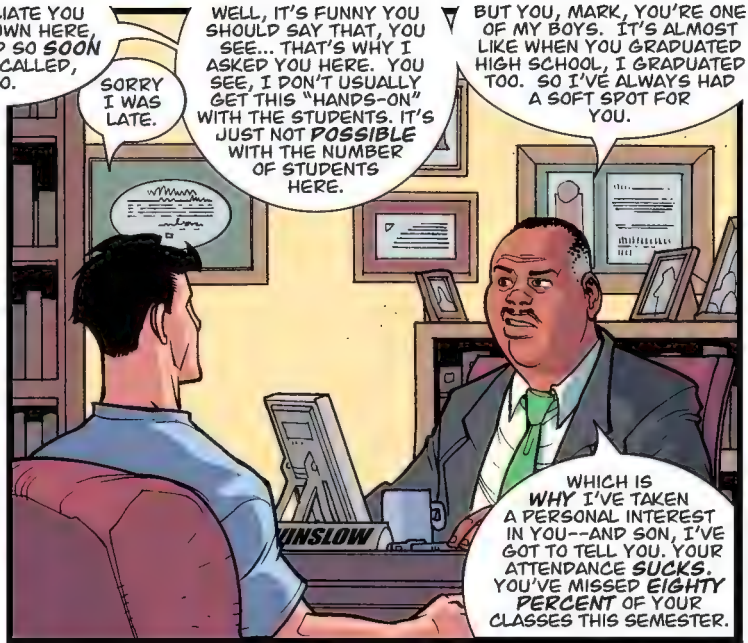


I APPRECIATE YOU COMING DOWN HERE, MARK--AND SO **SOON** AFTER I CALLED, TOO.

SORRY I WAS LATE.

WELL, IT'S FUNNY YOU SHOULD SAY THAT, YOU SEE... THAT'S WHY I ASKED YOU HERE. YOU SEE, I DON'T USUALLY GET THIS "HANDS-ON" WITH THE STUDENTS. IT'S JUST NOT **POSSIBLE** WITH THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS HERE.

BUT YOU, MARK, YOU'RE ONE OF MY BOYS. IT'S ALMOST LIKE WHEN YOU GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL, I GRADUATED TOO. SO I'VE ALWAYS HAD A SOFT SPOT FOR YOU.

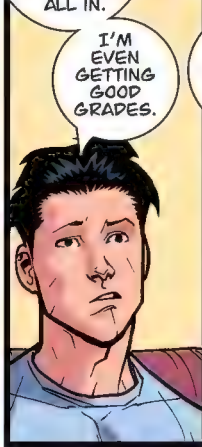


WHICH IS WHY I'VE TAKEN A PERSONAL INTEREST IN YOU--AND SON, I'VE GOT TO TELL YOU, YOUR ATTENDANCE **SUCKS**. YOU'VE MISSED **EIGHTY PERCENT** OF YOUR CLASSES THIS SEMESTER.

DO YOU REALIZE IF YOU WERE **ANYONE ELSE** YOU'D BE EJECTED FROM SCHOOL WITH A RECORD LIKE THIS?



BUT I **DO** TURN IN ALL MY WORK. LATE IN SOME CASES, SURE-- BUT I'VE TURNED IT ALL IN.



I'M EVEN GETTING GOOD GRADES.

AND WHEN YOU'RE DOCKED FOR LATENESS YOUR GRADES DROP DRAMATICALLY. YOU'RE STRUGGLING TO MAINTAIN A D AVERAGE RIGHT NOW... AND THAT JUST WON'T CUT IT.

WHAT'S THE **PROBLEM** HERE? WHAT'S KEEPING YOU OUT OF CLASS?



IS IT **DRUGS**?

LORD, NO!

I **SWEAR!**



IT'S **SOMETHING** AND WHATEVER IT IS, ALCOHOL, GIRLS, TELEVISION-- **WHATEVER**. IT'S SERIOUSLY HURTING YOU, MARK.

IT'S HURTING YOUR **FUTURE**.

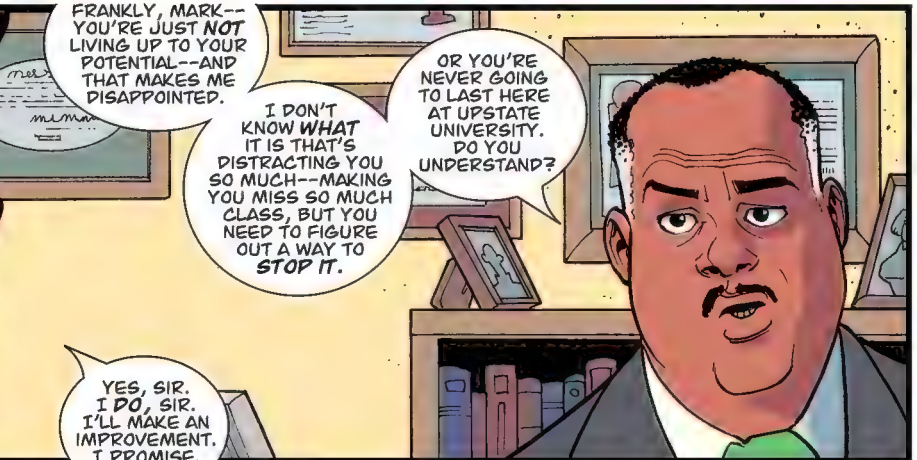


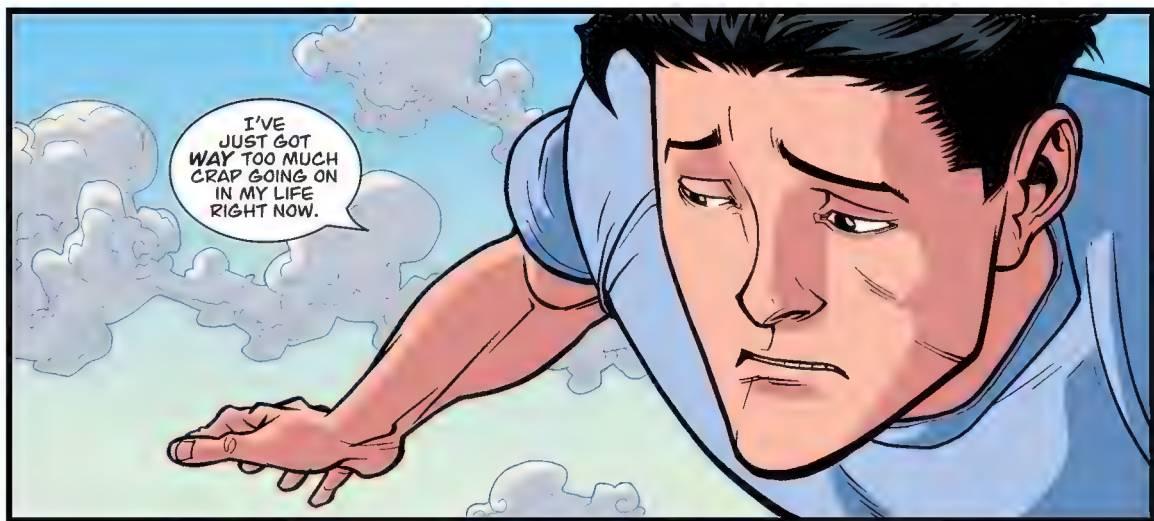
FRANKLY, MARK-- YOU'RE JUST NOT LIVING UP TO YOUR POTENTIAL--AND THAT MAKES ME DISAPPOINTED.

I DON'T KNOW **WHAT** IT IS THAT'S DISTRACTING YOU SO MUCH--MAKING YOU MISS SO MUCH CLASS, BUT YOU NEED TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO **STOP IT**.

OR YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO LAST HERE AT UPSTATE UNIVERSITY. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

YES, SIR. I **DO**, SIR. I'LL MAKE AN IMPROVEMENT. I PROMISE.



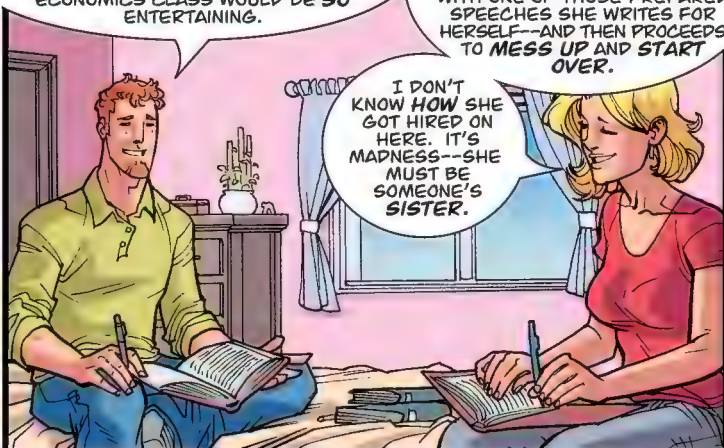




OH, MY GOD--SHE DOES THAT IN YOUR CLASS TOO? MAN, PROFESSOR BURGESS IS A TRIP, HUH? WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT AN ECONOMICS CLASS WOULD BE SO ENTERTAINING.

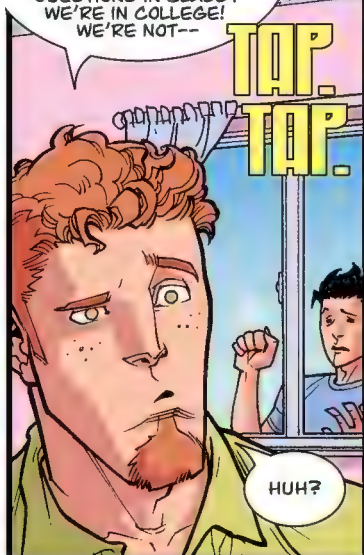
I KNOW, RIGHT? I WAS READY FOR A SNOOZE FEST BUT THEN SHE CAME IN ON THE FIRST DAY WITH ONE OF THOSE PREPARED SPEECHES SHE WRITES FOR HERSELF--AND THEN PROCEEDS TO MESS UP AND START OVER.

I DON'T KNOW HOW SHE GOT HIRED ON HERE. IT'S MADNESS--SHE MUST BE SOMEONE'S SISTER.

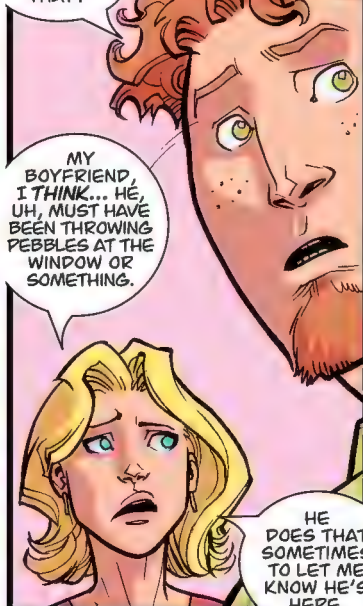


AND THEN THERE'S THE CANDY--CAN YOU BELIEVE SHE ACTUALLY GIVES US CANDY WHEN WE ANSWER QUESTIONS IN CLASS? WE'RE IN COLLEGE! WE'RE NOT--

TAP.
TAP.



WHAT WAS THAT?



BOYFRIEND? I'M NOT GETTING YOU IN TROUBLE FOR HAVING ME HERE, AM I?

NO, OF COURSE NOT. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.



WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT COMING TO THE WINDOW?

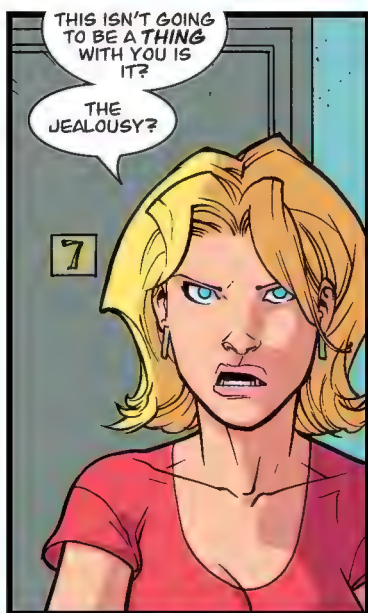
IS THAT A GUY IN THERE?! WHO IS THAT?

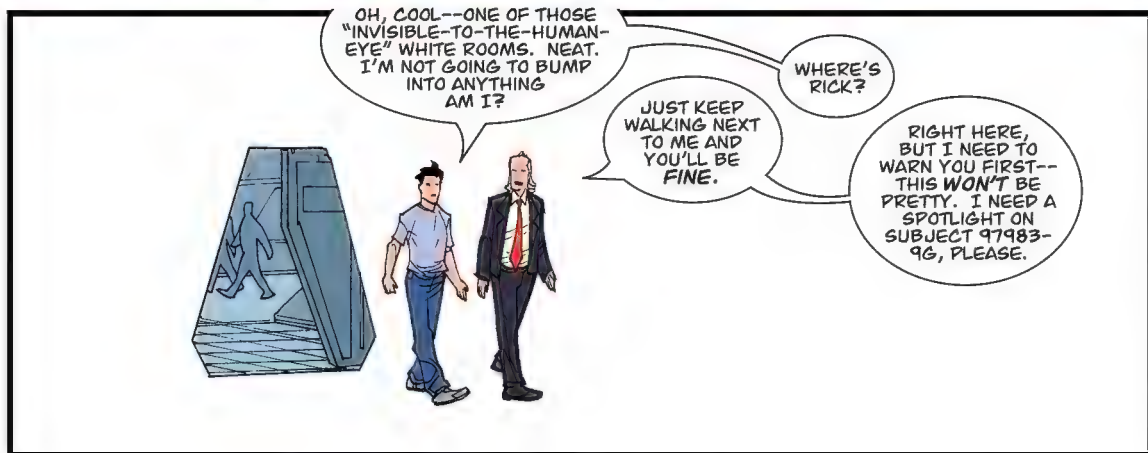
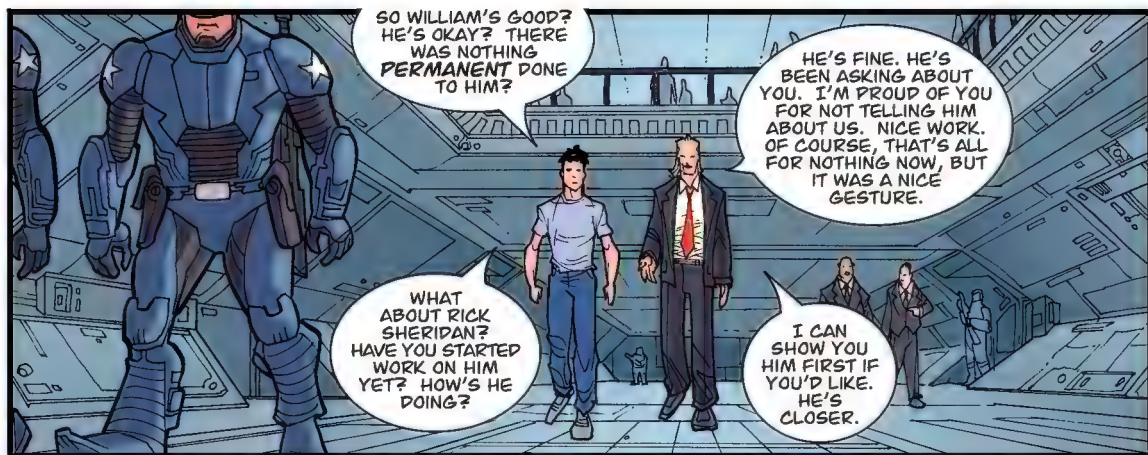
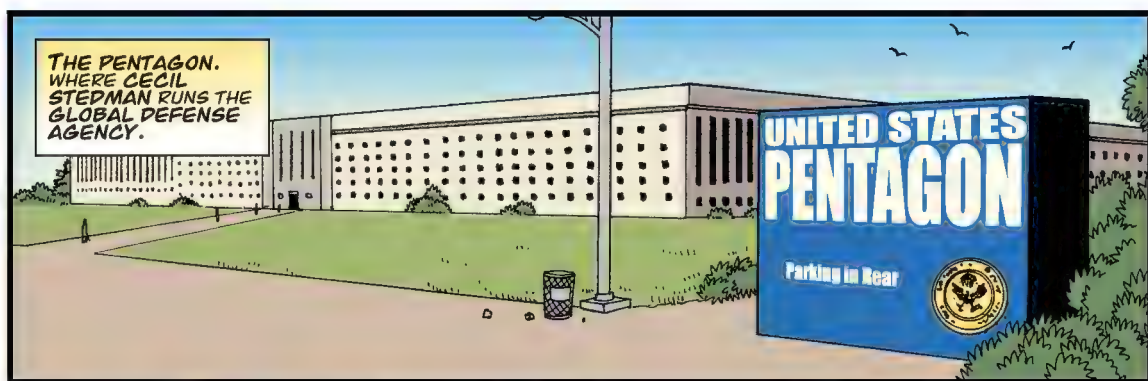
IT'S YOUR STUPID SECRET--AND I'VE TOLD YOU PEOPLE COME INTO MY ROOM SOME TIMES--IT'S NOT SAFE--BUT WHY AM I WORRIED ABOUT THAT WHEN YOU'RE NOT?!

THERE'S A GUY IN YOUR ROOM? HOW IS THAT COOL? WHY DO I NOT KNOW ABOUT THAT?

WHAT'S--?!





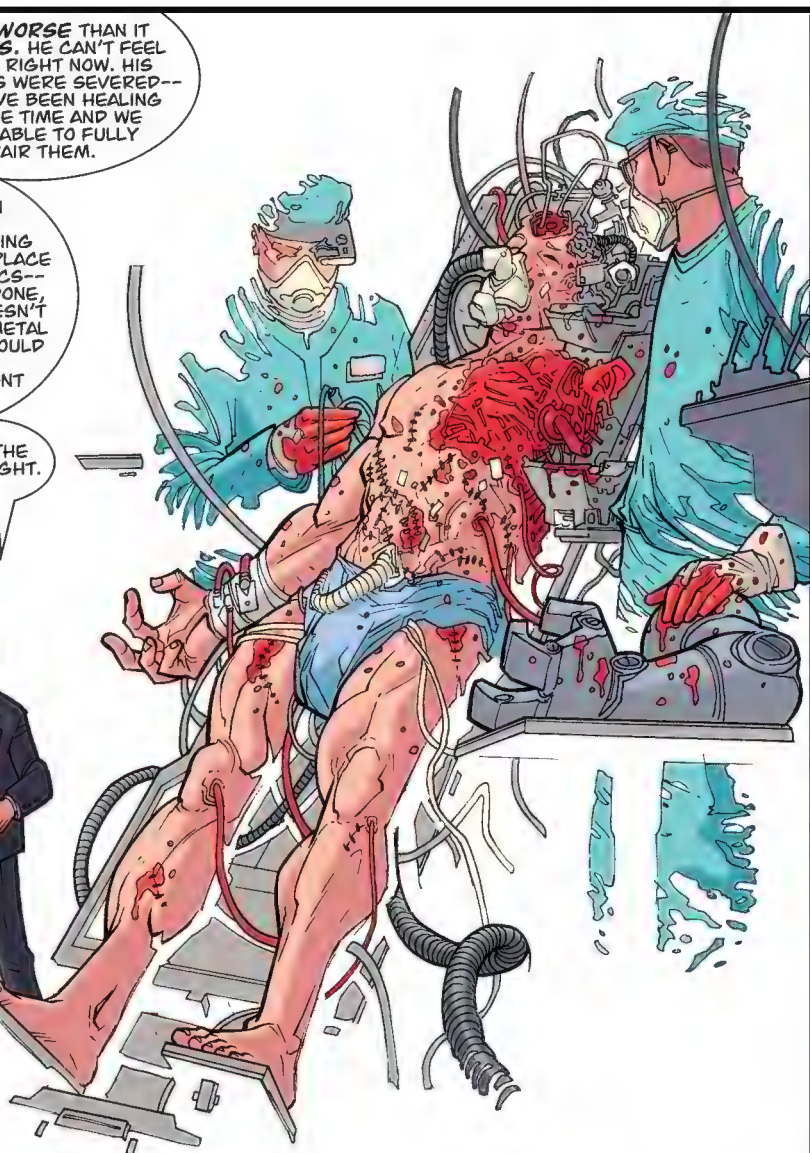


OH, MY
GOD!

IT LOOKS WORSE THAN IT
ACTUALLY IS. HE CAN'T FEEL
ANYTHING RIGHT NOW. HIS
VOCAL CORDS WERE SEVERED--
BUT THEY'VE BEEN HEALING
FOR SOME TIME AND WE
WILL BE ABLE TO FULLY
REPAIR THEM.

HIS LEFT
ARM HAS BEEN
SEVERED AND
DISCARDED, NOTHING
WE CAN DO BUT REPLACE
IT WITH CYBERNETICS--
BUT WHEN WE'RE DONE,
AS LONG AS HE DOESN'T
WALK THROUGH A METAL
DETECTOR--HE SHOULD
APPEAR ONE-
HUNDRED PERCENT
HUMAN.

KILL THE
SPOTLIGHT.



ARRGH!

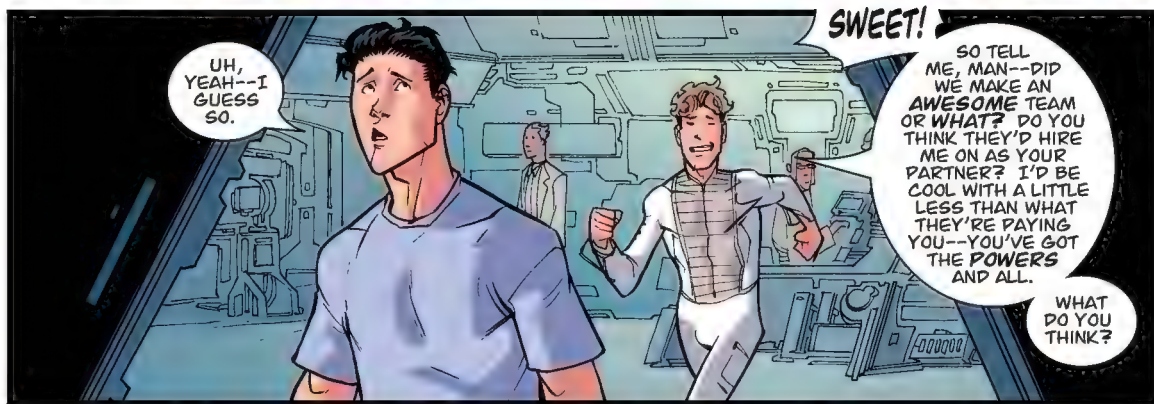
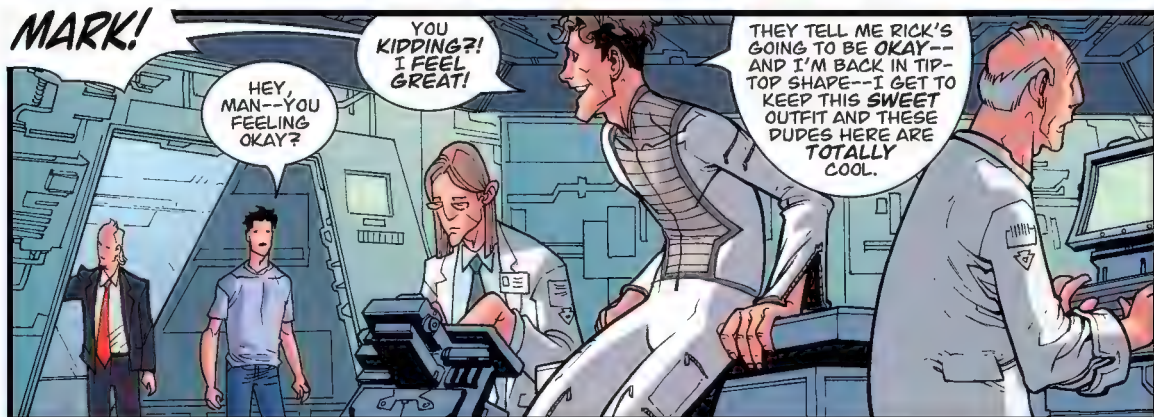
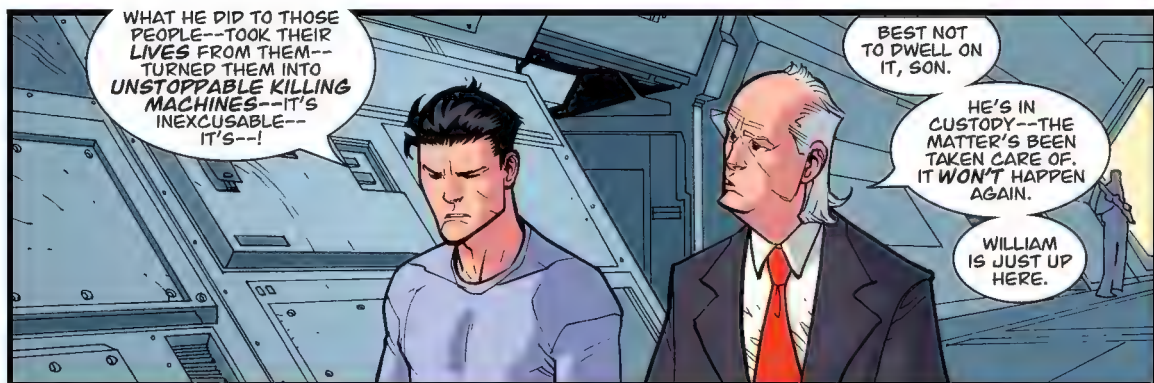
THAT--
MANIAC! I HOPE
HE FRIES FOR WHAT
HE'S DONE--RICK--
THOSE OTHER PEOPLE--
HE'S INSANE--HE'S
A MONSTER!

IF
YOU HADN'T
STOPPED
ME--

BE GLAD
I DID. A BROKEN
JAW IS ENOUGH
FOR HIM NOW.
DON'T WORRY,
MARK--HE'LL
GET WHAT HE
DESERVES.

COME ON--
I'LL TAKE YOU
TO WILLIAM.





AN UNDISCLOSED
LOCATION IN UTAH.

THE SECRET UNDERGROUND
MOUNTAIN BASE OF THE
GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE.

HEY, UH... ROBOT. I JUST
WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW
I HAD A REALLY GOOD
TIME AT THE MOVIES
LAST NIGHT.

OH, HEY--ME
TOO. **REALLY.**
WE SHOULD DO
IT AGAIN SOME
TIME.

I WOULDN'T MIND MAKING
IT A REGULAR THING. I
WAS MEANING TO ASK,
THOUGH--YOUR NEW
BODY...

DOES
IT, UH... **AGE**
NATURALLY?

UH, YEAH--
IT DOES.
WHY?

OH, I WAS JUST KINDA
HOPING I'D HAVE MORE
THAN A **FEW YEARS**
BEFORE YOU AGED ENOUGH
FOR US TO GET FUNNY
GLANCES FROM PEOPLE
WHEN WE'RE SEEN
TOGETHER.

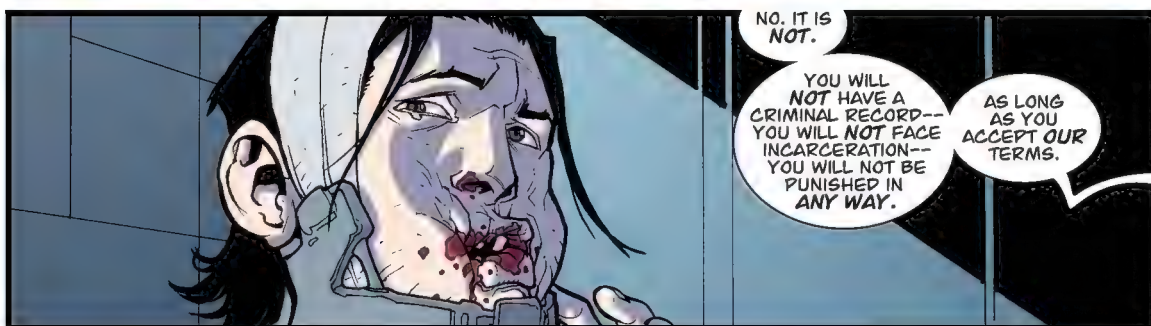
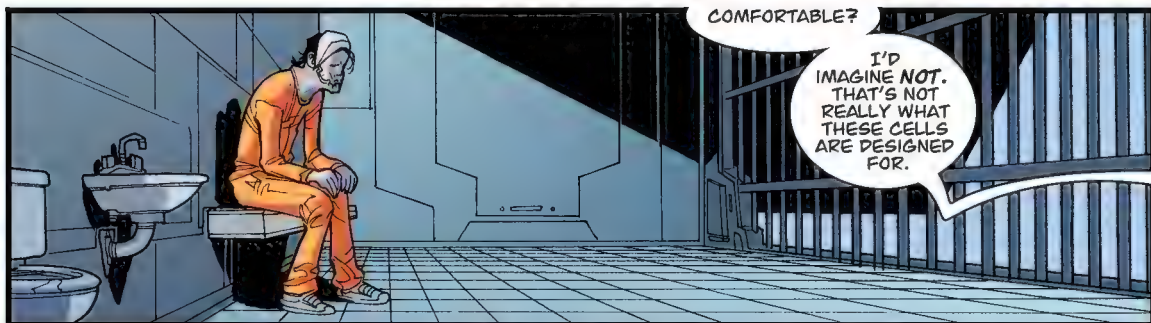
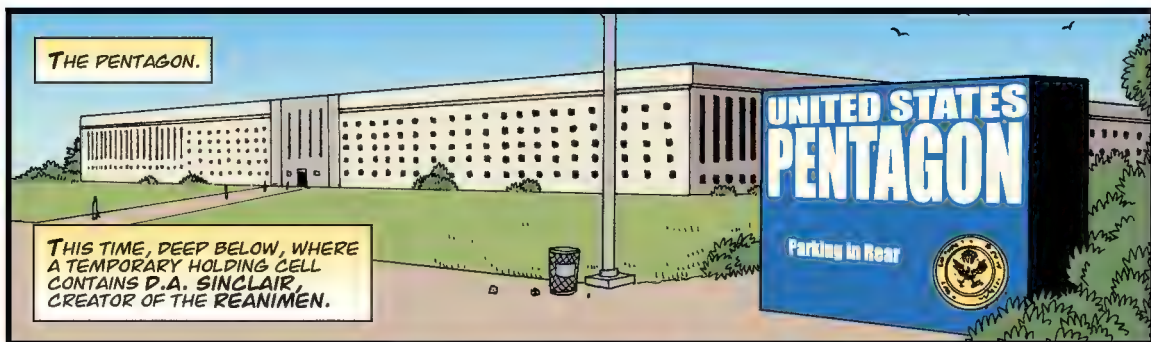
THAT'S
ALL.

I'M GLAD YOU BROUGHT THAT UP.
I HAVEN'T STOPPED WORKING ON
CURING YOUR AGING PROBLEM--
IN FACT, I'VE RECENTLY MADE
A BREAKTHROUGH.

I THINK I MAY ACTUALLY
BE ABLE TO **CURE** YOU--
IF IT WORKS, YOU'LL BE
AGING NORMALLY IN
NO TIME.

DON'T TAKE
THIS THE WRONG
WAY--I'VE JUST
BEEN LIKE THIS
FOR A **LONG**
TIME.

I'LL
BELIEVE IT
WHEN I
SEE IT.





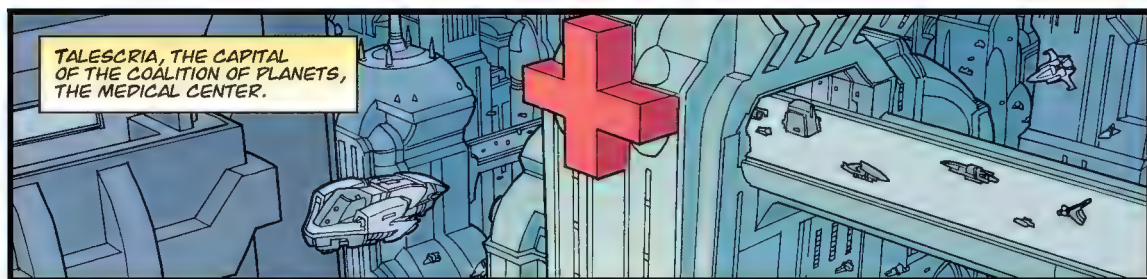
D.A.
SINCLAIR...

THE
UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT
WOULD LIKE TO
OFFER YOU A
JOB.

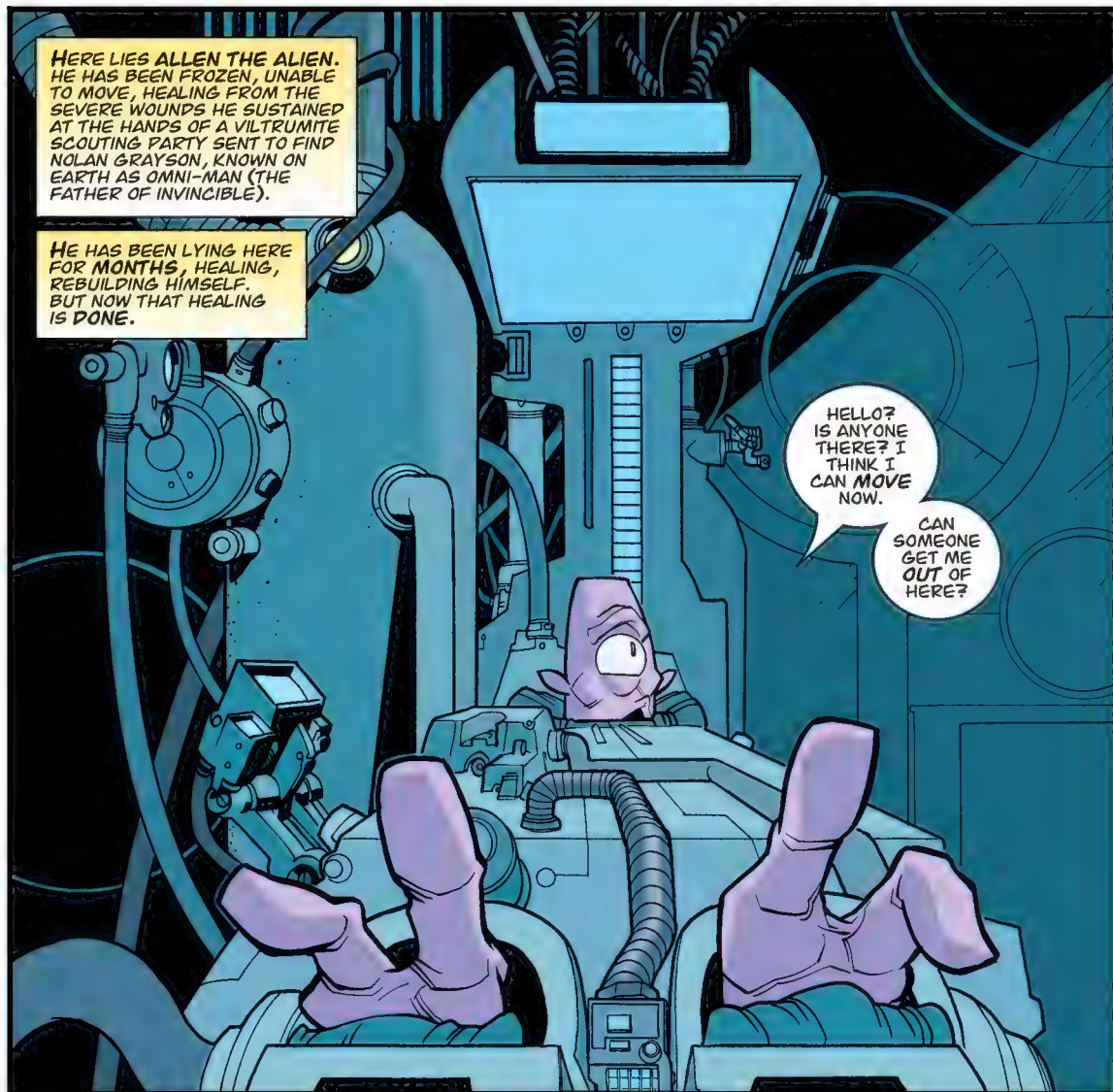


CHAPTER THREE





TALESCRIA, THE CAPITAL
OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS,
THE MEDICAL CENTER.



HERE LIES ALLEN THE ALIEN.
HE HAS BEEN FROZEN, UNABLE
TO MOVE, HEALING FROM THE
SEVERE WOUNDS HE SUSTAINED
AT THE HANDS OF A VILTRUMITE
SCOUTING PARTY SENT TO FIND
NOLAN GRAYSON, KNOWN ON
EARTH AS OMNI-MAN (THE
FATHER OF INVINCIBLE).

HE HAS BEEN LYING HERE
FOR MONTHS, HEALING,
REBUILDING HIMSELF.
BUT NOW THAT HEALING
IS DONE.

HELLO?
IS ANYONE
THERE? I
THINK I
CAN MOVE
NOW.

CAN
SOMEONE
GET ME
OUT OF
HERE?



SKRA-KOOM!





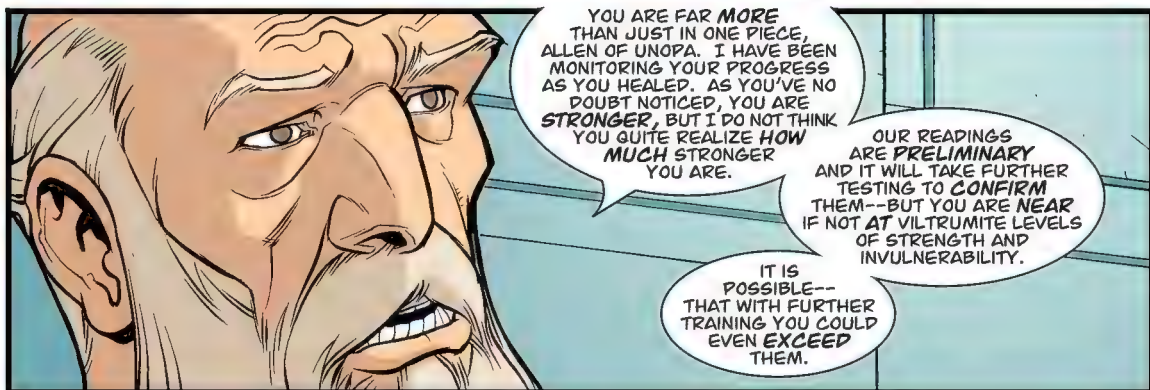
SOMETIME LATER, THE LEADER OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS, THE GREAT THAEPUS HAS ARRIVED TO CHECK IN ON THE NEWLY HEALED ALLEN THE ALIEN.

RIGHT THIS WAY, SIR. HE'S JUST THROUGH THESE DOORS AHEAD.



ALLEN, IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU IN ONE PIECE, MY FRIEND.

IT IS GOOD TO BE IN ONE PIECE, SIR.



YOU ARE FAR MORE THAN JUST IN ONE PIECE, ALLEN OF UNOPA. I HAVE BEEN MONITORING YOUR PROGRESS AS YOU HEALED. AS YOU'VE NO DOUBT NOTICED, YOU ARE STRONGER, BUT I DO NOT THINK YOU QUITE REALIZE HOW MUCH STRONGER YOU ARE.

OUR READINGS ARE PRELIMINARY AND IT WILL TAKE FURTHER TESTING TO CONFIRM THEM--BUT YOU ARE NEAR IF NOT AT VILTRUMITE LEVELS OF STRENGTH AND INVULNERABILITY.

IT IS POSSIBLE-- THAT WITH FURTHER TRAINING YOU COULD EVEN EXCEED THEM.



HOW CAN YOU MAKE SUCH A COMPARISON? THE COALITION HAS NO DEFINITIVE RECORDS ON THE STRENGTH OF A VILTRUMITE.

WHERE ARE YOU GETTING YOUR INFORMATION?

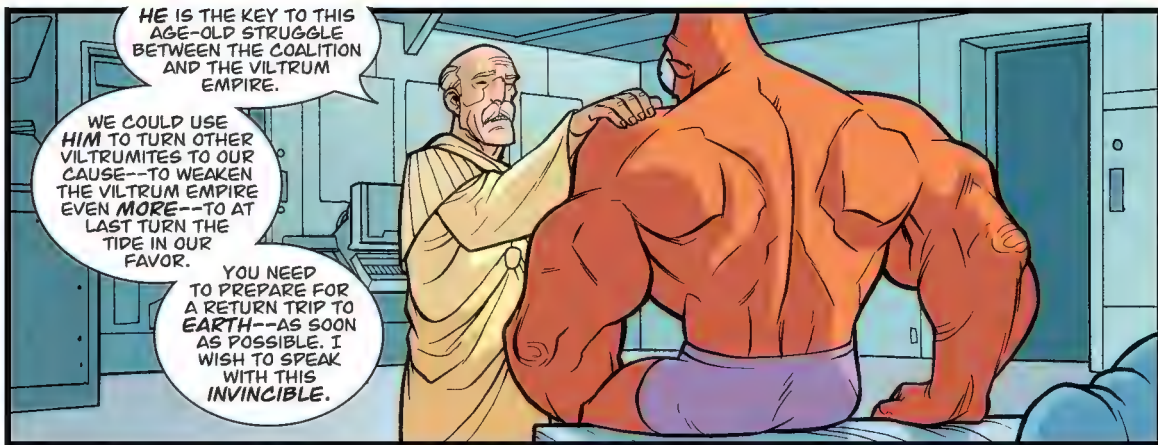
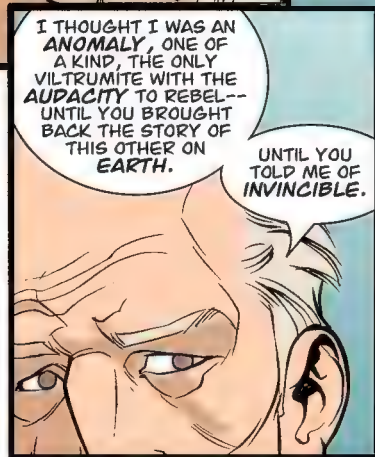
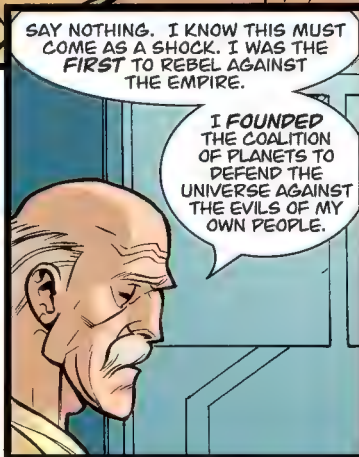


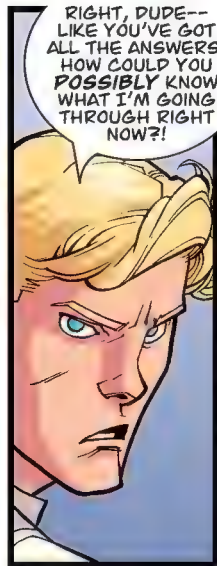
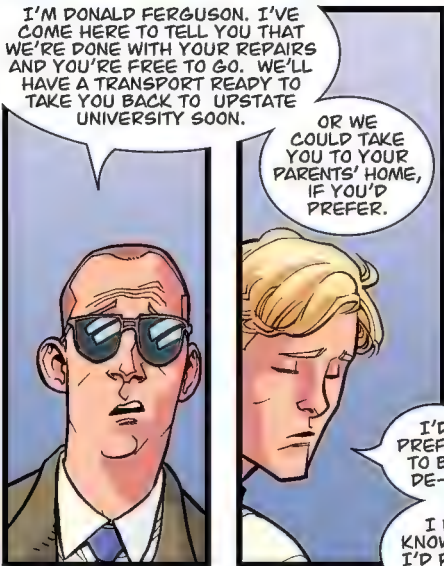
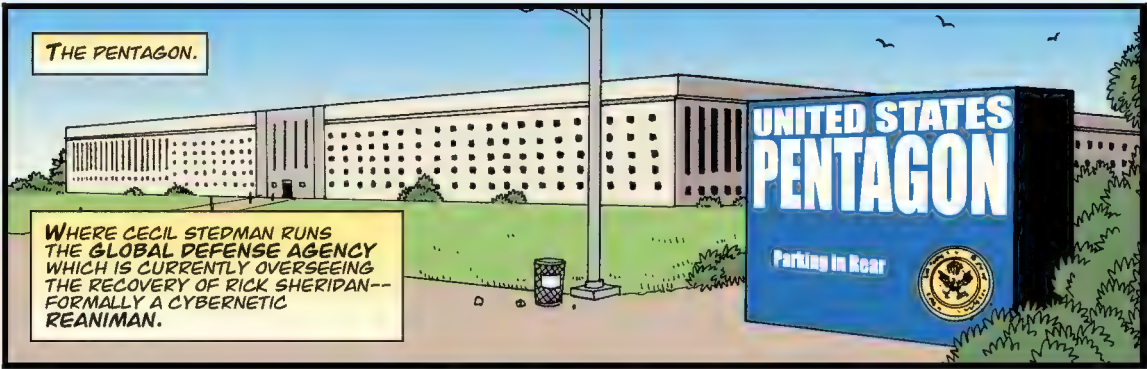
PLEASE GIVE US A MOMENT, NURSE. I NEED TO SPEAK IN PRIVATE WITH ALLEN.

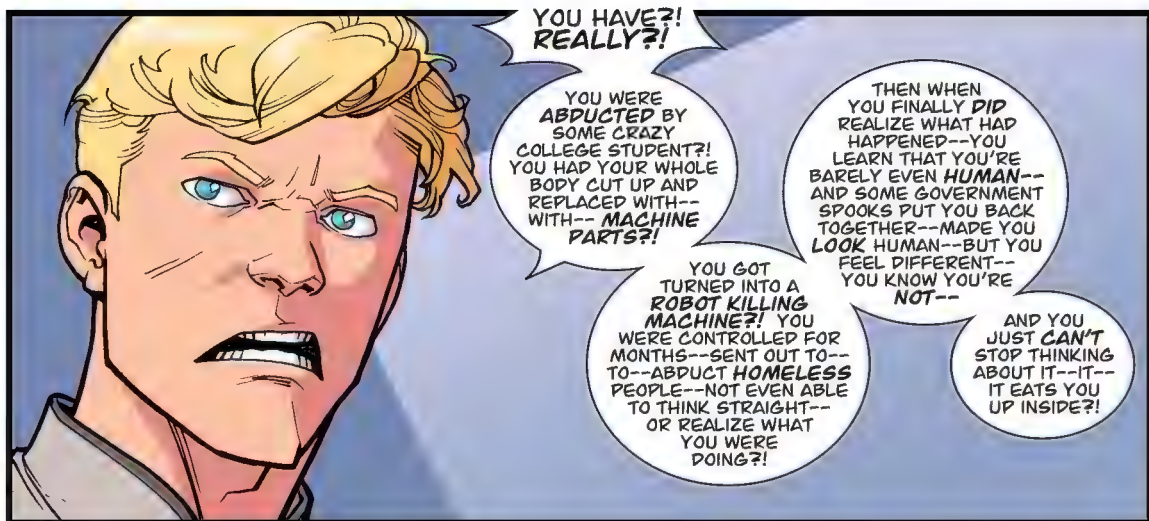
YES, GREAT THAEPUS. AS YOU WISH.



I KNOW THE SPECIFIC STRENGTH LEVELS OF A VILTRUMITE, ALLEN...







YOU HAVE?!
REALLY?!

YOU WERE
ABDUCTED BY
SOME CRAZY
COLLEGE STUDENT?!
YOU HAD YOUR WHOLE
BODY CUT UP AND
REPLACED WITH--
WITH-- MACHINE
PARTS?!

THEN WHEN
YOU FINALLY DID
REALIZE WHAT HAD
HAPPENED--YOU
LEARN THAT YOU'RE
BARELY EVEN HUMAN--
AND SOME GOVERNMENT
SPOOKS PUT YOU BACK
TOGETHER--MADE YOU
LOOK HUMAN--BUT YOU
FEEL DIFFERENT--
YOU KNOW YOU'RE
NOT--

YOU GOT
TURNED INTO A
ROBOT KILLING
MACHINE?! YOU
WERE CONTROLLED FOR
MONTHS--SENT OUT TO--
TO--ABDUCT HOMELESS
PEOPLE--NOT EVEN ABLE
TO THINK STRAIGHT--
OR REALIZE WHAT
YOU WERE
DOING?!

AND YOU
JUST CAN'T
STOP THINKING
ABOUT IT--IT--
IT EATS YOU
UP INSIDE?!

MY STORY IS
JUST A TINY BIT
DIFFERENT, BUT
YEAH--I'VE
BEEN THROUGH
ALL OF
THAT.

I USED TO BE A FIELD
AGENT. WHILE ON A
MISSION--I DIED. MY
BODY WAS RECOVERED.
PARTS OF MY BRAIN
WERE PRESERVED--USED
TO POWER THIS BODY,
WHICH IS NINETY-
EIGHT PERCENT
MACHINE.

I DIDN'T
HAVE ACCESS TO
MY EMOTIONS FOR
SOME TIME--AND MY
MEMORIES WERE
DOCTORED SO I DIDN'T
REMEMBER MY
DEATH--I DIDN'T
EVEN KNOW I WAS
AN ANDROID FOR
YEARS.

I LOST
MY WIFE
OVER IT.



OH,
MAN--I'M
SORRY.

WE'VE RECONCILED
SINCE THE SPLIT--
BUT YEAH, I'VE BEEN
THROUGH SOME
ROUGH TIMES.

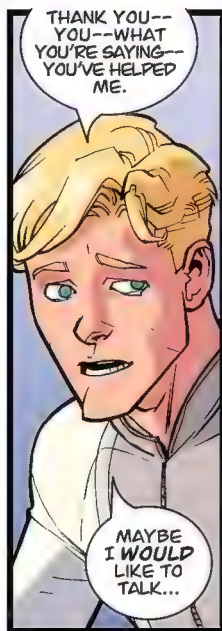
AND I
HAD TO DO
IT ALONE.

IT'S NOT THE END OF
THE WORLD. THE
THINGS WE'VE DONE TO
YOU--THE REPAIRS--
NOBODY WILL EVEN
KNOW YOU'RE NOT
NORMAL UNLESS YOU
TELL THEM.



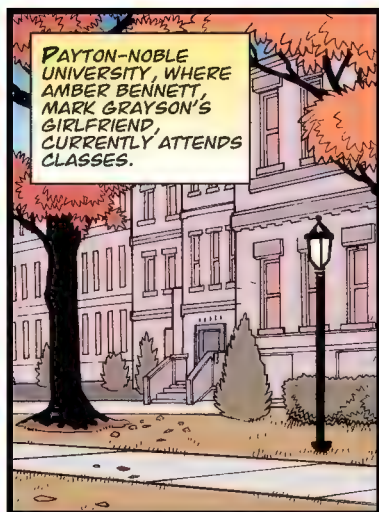
YOUR
GIRLFRIEND--
WIFE, YOUR
FAMILY--
NOBODY.

YOU CAN
STILL LIVE A
NORMAL LIFE IF
YOU WANT TO.



THANK YOU--
YOU--WHAT
YOU'RE SAYING--
YOU'VE HELPED
ME.

MAYBE
I WOULD
LIKE TO
TALK...



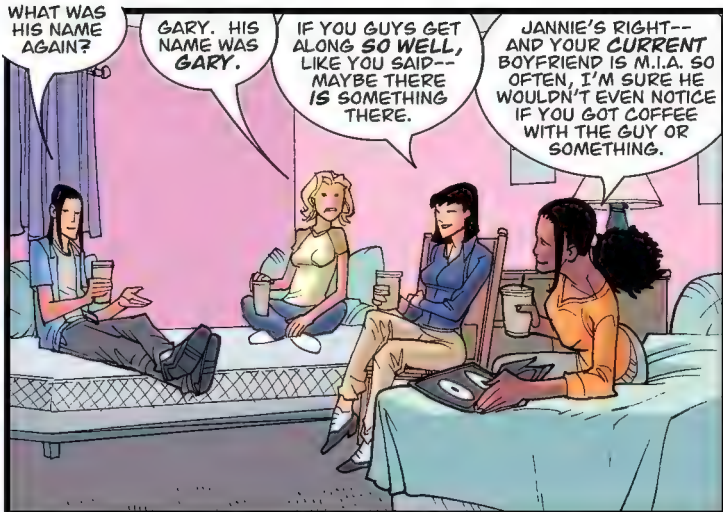
PAYTON-NOBLE UNIVERSITY, WHERE AMBER BENNETT, MARK GRAYSON'S GIRLFRIEND, CURRENTLY ATTENDS CLASSES.

WHAT WAS HIS NAME AGAIN?

GARY. HIS NAME WAS GARY.

IF YOU GUYS GET ALONG SO WELL, LIKE YOU SAID-- MAYBE THERE IS SOMETHING THERE.

JANNIE'S RIGHT-- AND YOUR CURRENT BOYFRIEND IS M.I.A. SO OFTEN, I'M SURE HE WOULDN'T EVEN NOTICE IF YOU GOT COFFEE WITH THE GUY OR SOMETHING.



OKAY, FIRST OFF-- I LOVE MARK. I'M "IN LOVE" WITH HIM. WE'RE SERIOUS, SO THAT'S JUST NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.

SORRY TO BURST YOUR BUBBLE, BRIDGET.

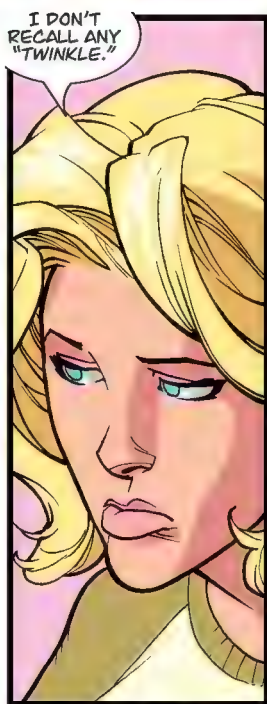
SECOND-- WHEN DID I SAY "WE GET ALONG SO WELL?" AS I RECALL MY WORDS WERE "HE'S FUNNY." I THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO BE A CREEP AND IT TURNED OUT HE WAS FUNNY-- NOT AT ALL HARD TO BE AROUND.

YOU ACT LIKE I WAS GUSHING ABOUT HOW GREAT THIS GUY WAS.



AH, BUT IT WAS THE TWINKLE IN YOUR EYE THAT GAVE YOU AWAY.

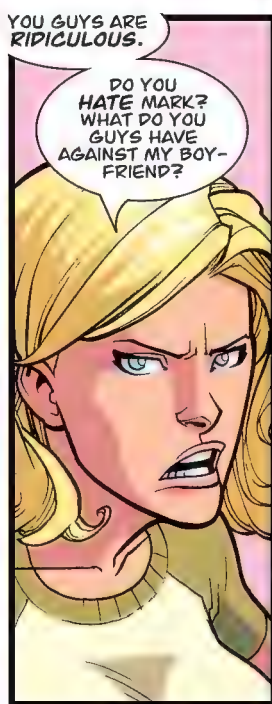
YOU CAN'T HIDE THE TWINKLE.



I DON'T RECALL ANY "TWINKLE."

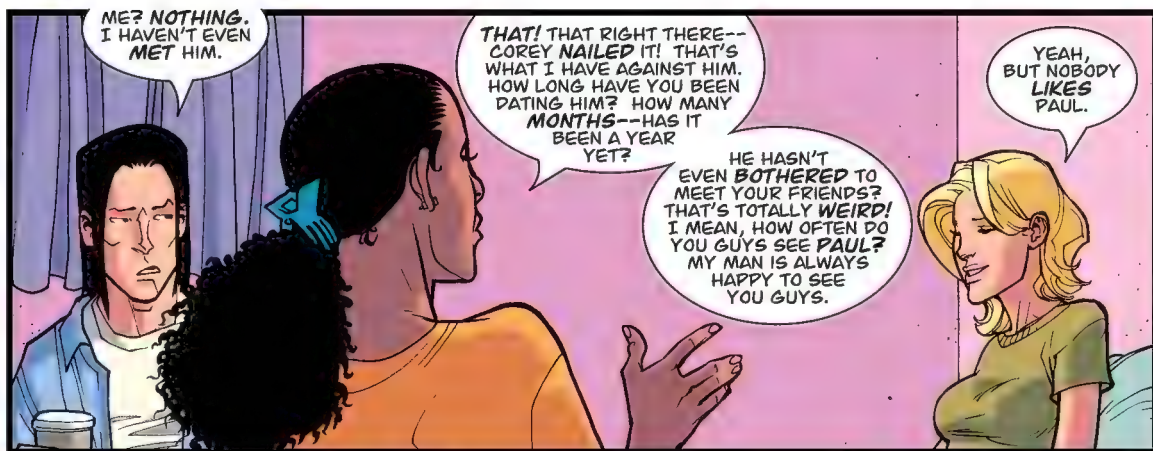


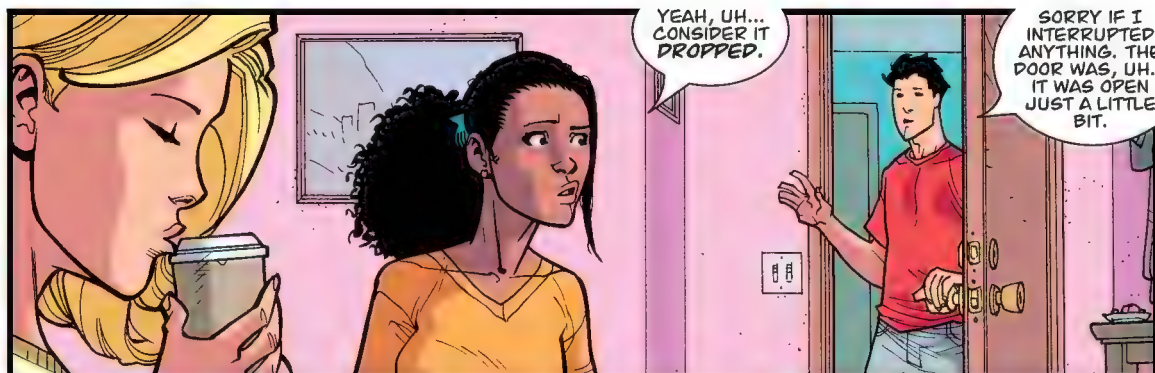
THERE WAS A TWINKLE. IT WAS QUITE CUTE.



YOU GUYS ARE RIDICULOUS.

DO YOU HATE MARK? WHAT DO YOU GUYS HAVE AGAINST MY BOY-FRIEND?



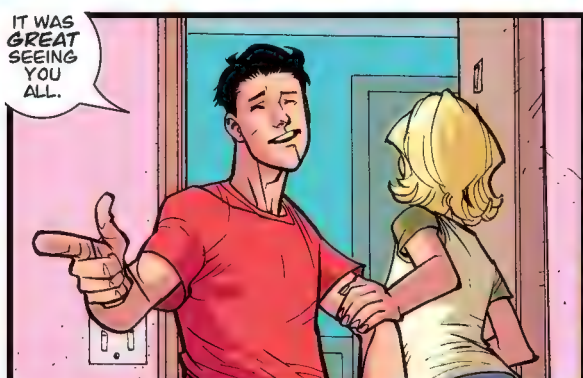


YEAH, UH...
CONSIDER IT
DROPPED.

SORRY IF I
INTERRUPTED
ANYTHING. THE
DOOR WAS, UH...
IT WAS OPEN
JUST A LITTLE
BIT.



EXCUSE
US.



IT WAS
GREAT
SEEING
YOU
ALL.



YOUR
FRIENDS
SEEM
SOOOO
NICE.

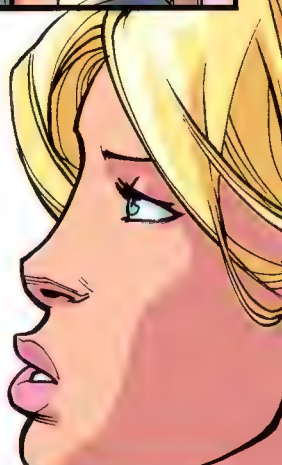
CHRIST,
HOW MUCH
DID YOU
HEAR?

JUST THAT
BIT YOU SAID
AT THE END--THE
PART ABOUT THEM
TELLING YOU
TO CHEAT ON
ME.

THAT'S ALL?
YOU DIDN'T HEAR
ANYTHING ELSE?
I THOUGHT--?

SUPER-
HEARING IS
NOT ONE OF MY
POWERS. WE'VE
TALKED ABOUT
THIS BEFORE.

RIGHT.



I WANTED TO
APOLOGIZE ABOUT
LAST TIME--HOW
I LEFT SO
ABRUPTLY.



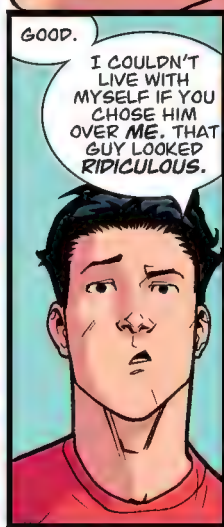
S'OKAY. IT'S
PART OF "THE
DEAL." I
UNDERSTAND.



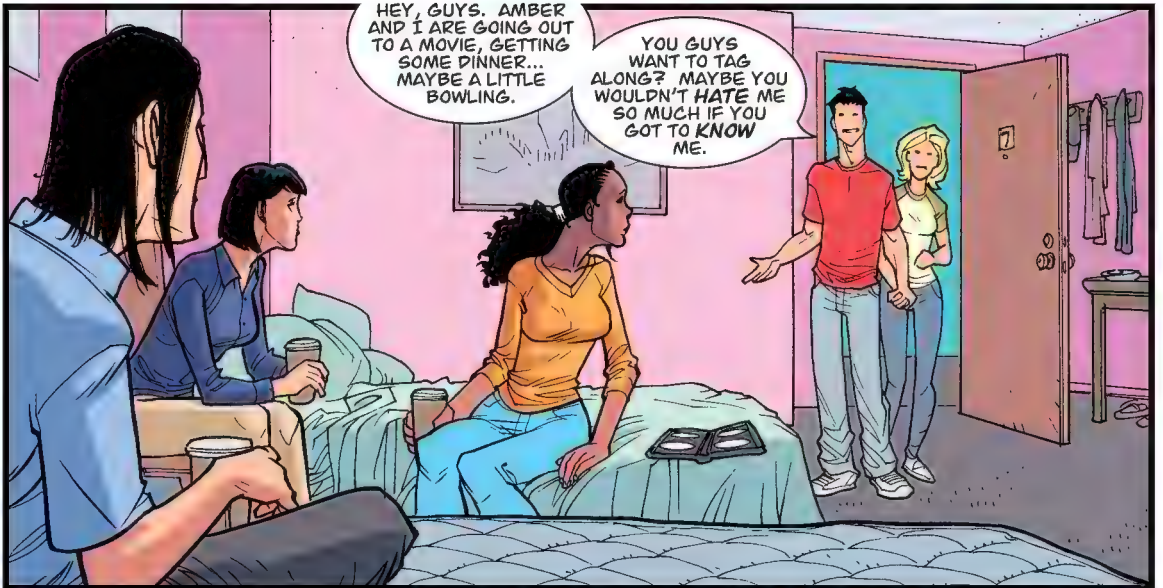
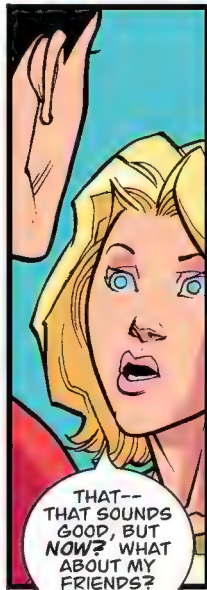
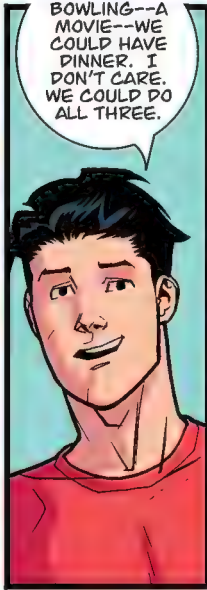
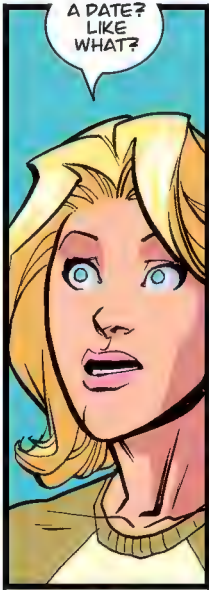
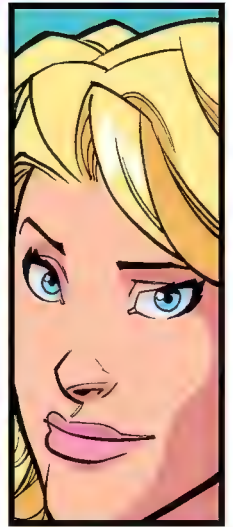
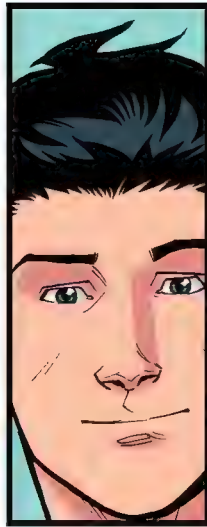
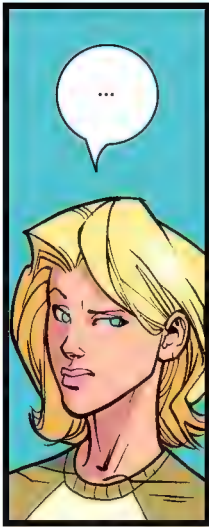
YOU SOUND...
DISSATISFIED.
YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO TAKE
THEIR ADVICE
ARE YOU?



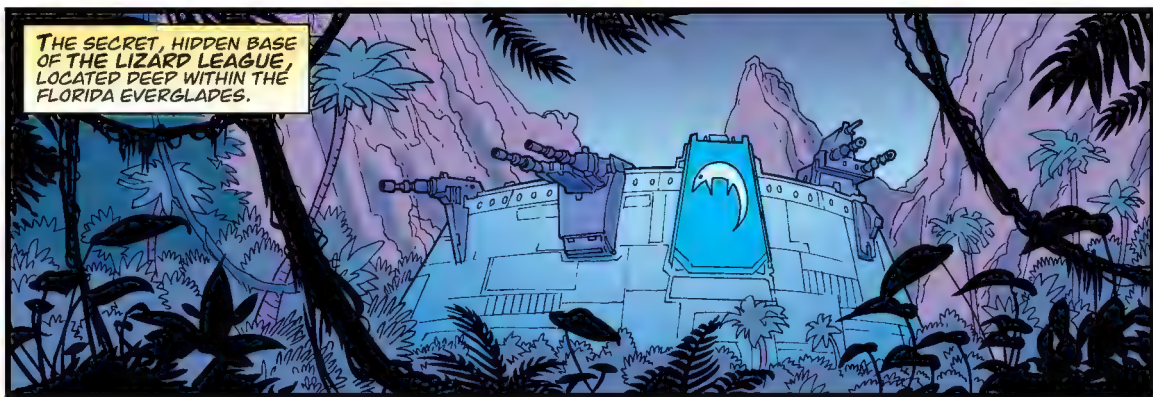
MARK,
PLEASE--
HE'S JUST A
GUY, I PROMISE.
HE'S NICE.
BUT THERE'S
NOTHING
THERE.



GOOD.
I COULDN'T
LIVE WITH
MYSELF IF YOU
CHOSE HIM
OVER ME. THAT
GUY LOOKED
RIDICULOUS.



THE SECRET, HIDDEN BASE
OF THE LIZARD LEAGUE,
LOCATED DEEP WITHIN THE
FLORIDA EVERGLADES.



TOO
LONG HAS THIS
ORGANIZATION
BEEN A FAILURE--
A JOKE!

NO
MORE, I
SAY!

NO
MORE!!

NOW THAT
I, SUPREME
LIZARD, AM IN
COMMAND--AND
THAT INCOMPETENT
KING LIZARD IS NO
LONGER ATTEMPTING
TO LEAD US FROM
PRISON--WE
CAN MAKE A
CHANGE!

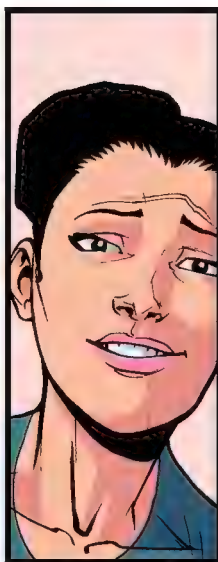
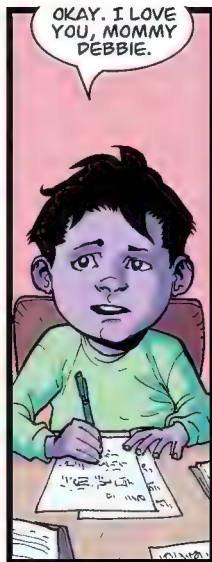
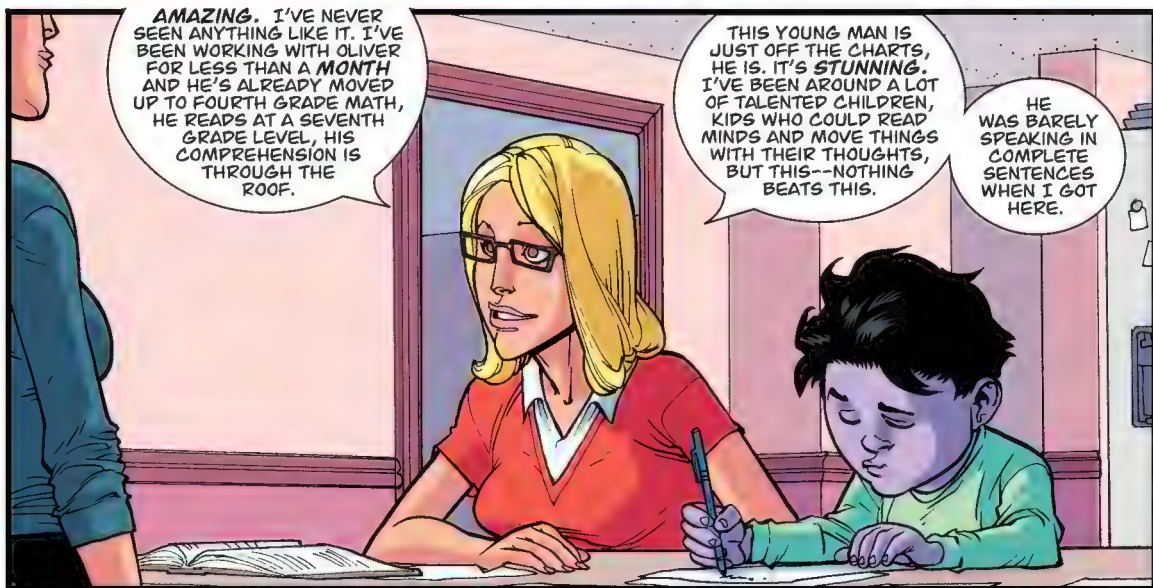
WE CAN
BECOME A
FORCE TO BE
RECKONED
WITH!



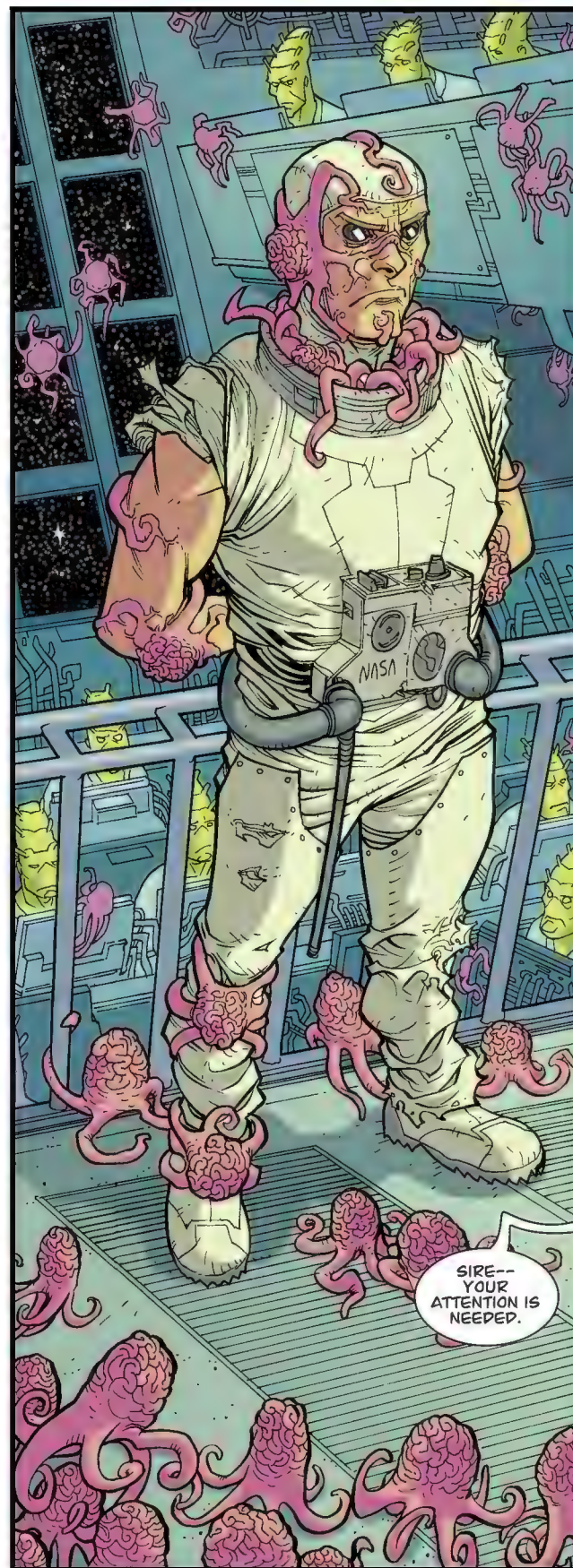
ALL HAIL
SUPREME
LIZARD!







AT THAT MOMENT--
DEEP IN SPACE.

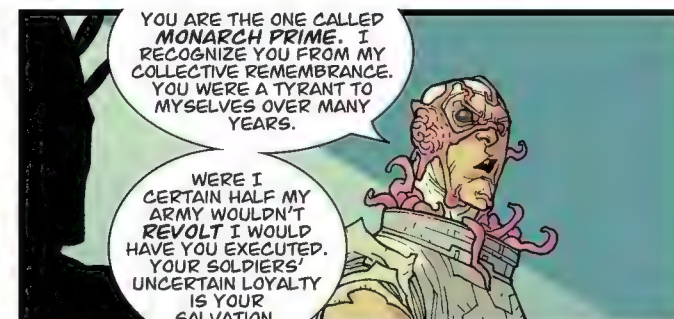


SIRE--
YOUR
ATTENTION IS
NEEDED.



WE CAUGHT HIM TRYING
TO CAUSE A PLASMA LEAK
IN THE ENGINES--THIS
ACTION WOULD HAVE
HALTED OUR TRAVELS
INDEFINITELY.

WHAT
WILL WE BE
REQUIRED
TO DO WITH
HIM?

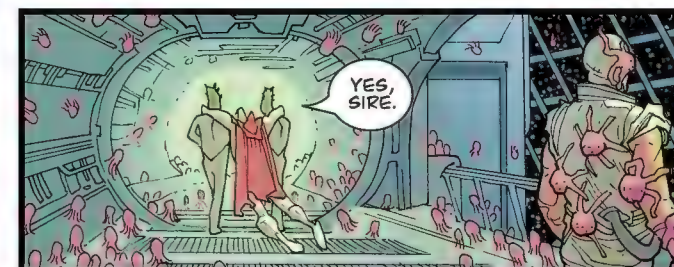


YOU ARE THE ONE CALLED
MONARCH PRIME. I
RECOGNIZE YOU FROM MY
COLLECTIVE REMEMBRANCE.
YOU WERE A TYRANT TO
MYSELVES OVER MANY
YEARS.

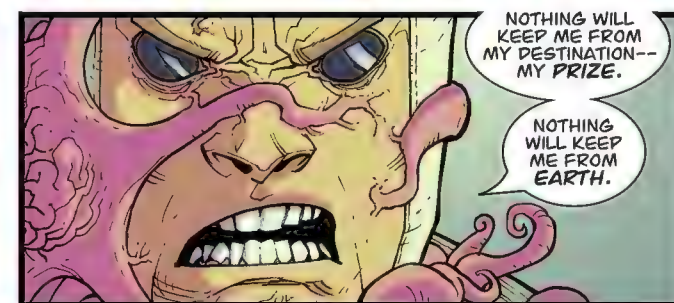
WERE I
CERTAIN HALF MY
ARMY WOULDN'T
REVOLT I WOULD
HAVE YOU EXECUTED.
YOUR SOLDIERS'
UNCERTAIN LOYALTY
IS YOUR
SALVATION.



IF THIS
ONE WILL NOT
REMAIN IN HIS CELL
PLACE HIM IN A STASIS
UNIT. I'LL NOT
SUFFER AN ATTACK
FROM HIM
AGAIN.

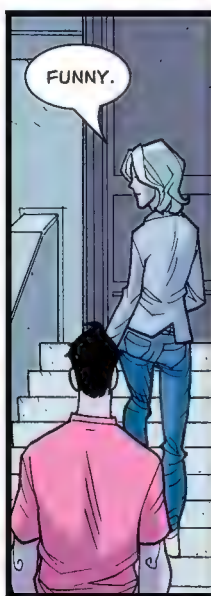
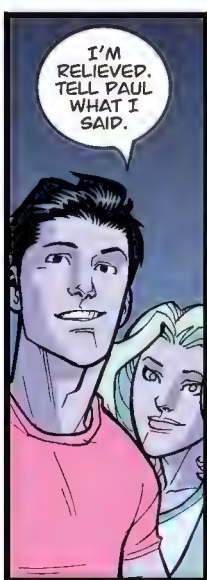


YES,
SIRE.



NOTHING WILL
KEEP ME FROM
MY DESTINATION--
MY PRIZE.

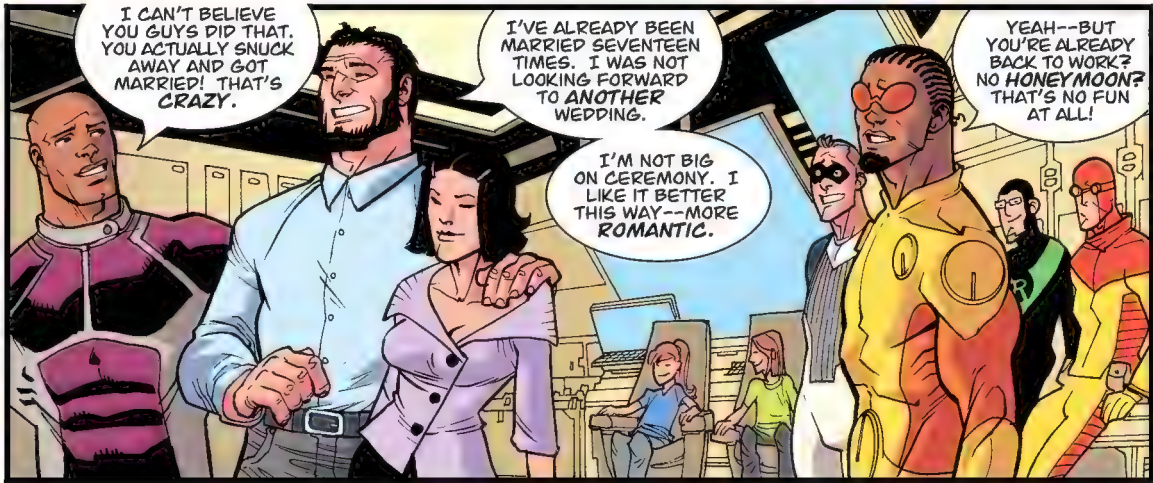
NOTHING
WILL KEEP
ME FROM
EARTH.





AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION IN UTAH.

THE SECRET MOUNTAIN BASE OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE.



I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU GUYS DID THAT. YOU ACTUALLY SNUCK AWAY AND GOT MARRIED! THAT'S CRAZY.

I'VE ALREADY BEEN MARRIED SEVENTEEN TIMES. I WAS NOT LOOKING FORWARD TO ANOTHER WEDDING.

YEAH--BUT YOU'RE ALREADY BACK TO WORK? NO HONEYMOON? THAT'S NO FUN AT ALL!

I'M NOT BIG ON CEREMONY. I LIKE IT BETTER THIS WAY--MORE ROMANTIC.



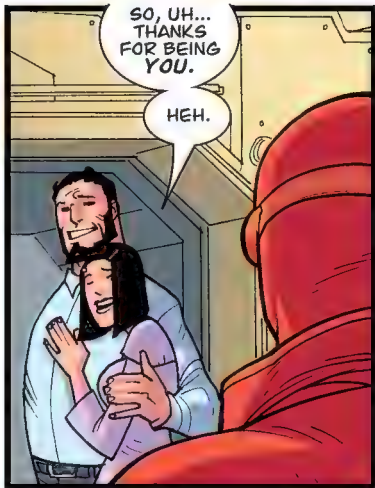
CONGRATULATIONS, GUYS.

IMMORTAL-- YOU'RE A LUCKY GUY. YOU, UH, COULDN'T HAVE PICKED A BETTER GIRL.



THAT'S SWEET, REX.

IF YOU'D SHOWN ME EVEN A LITTLE BIT OF COMPASSION WHILE WE WERE TOGETHER MAYBE WE'D STILL BE TOGETHER.



SO, UH... THANKS FOR BEING YOU.

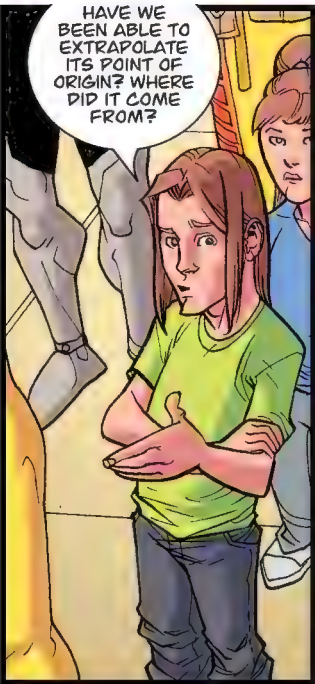
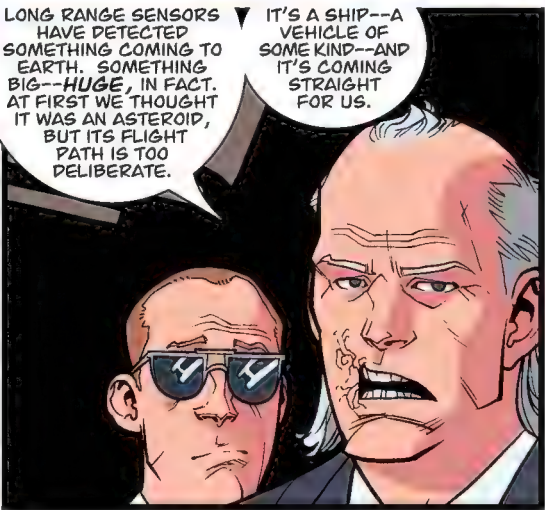
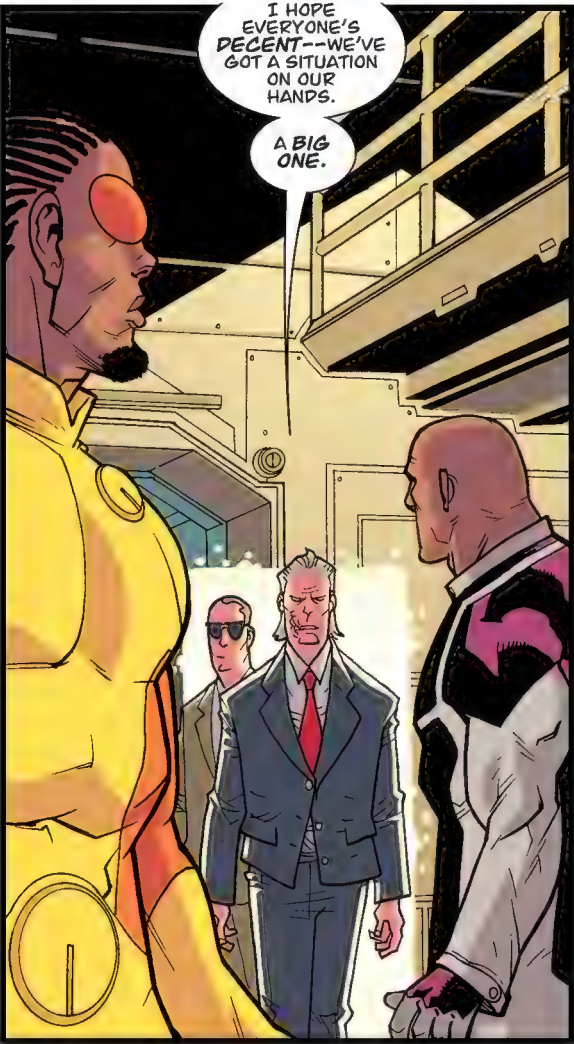
HEH.

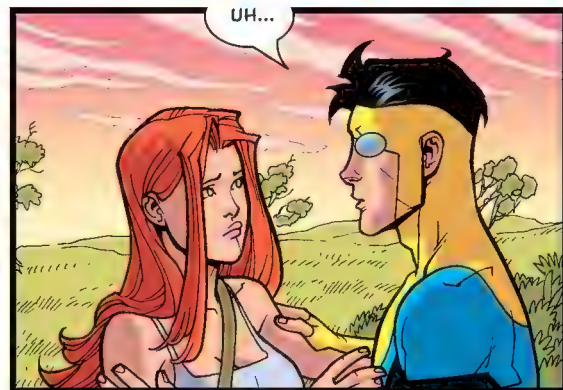
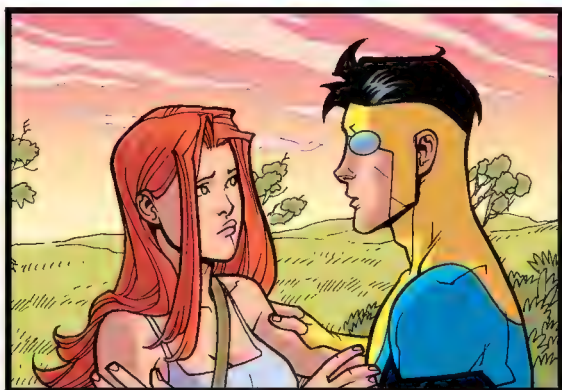
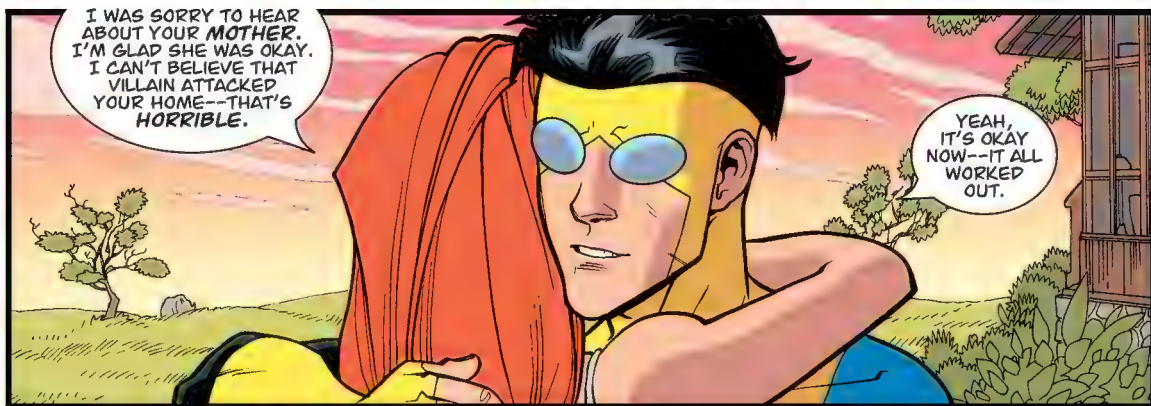
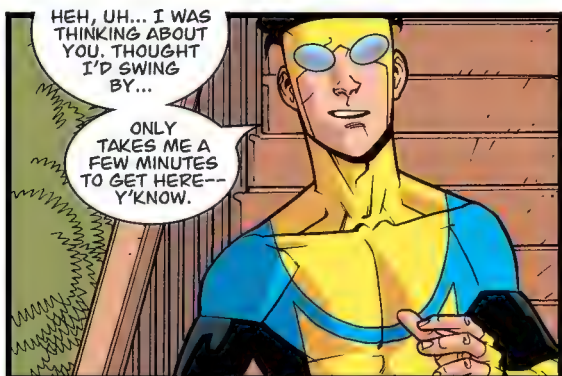
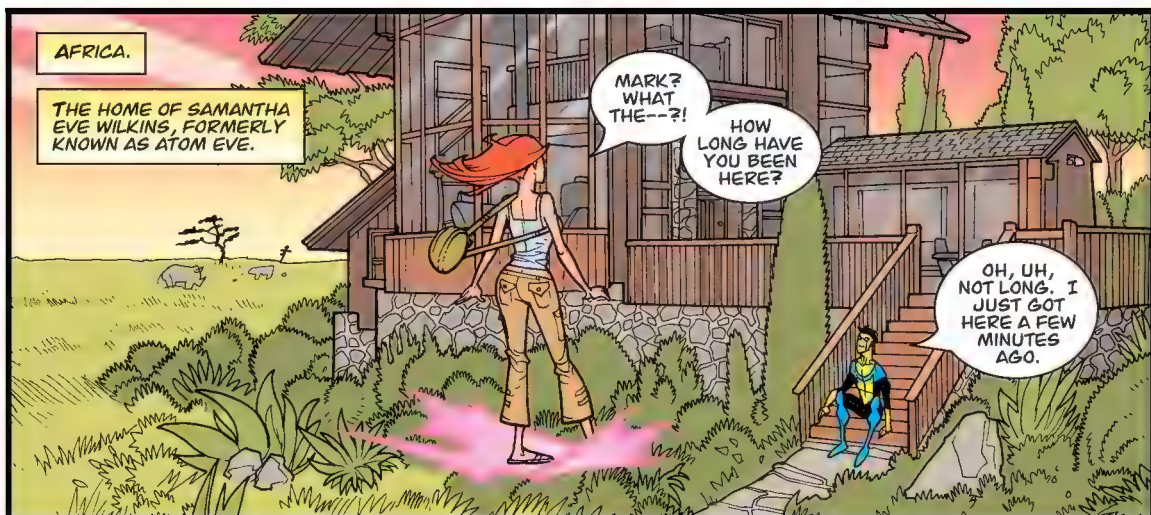


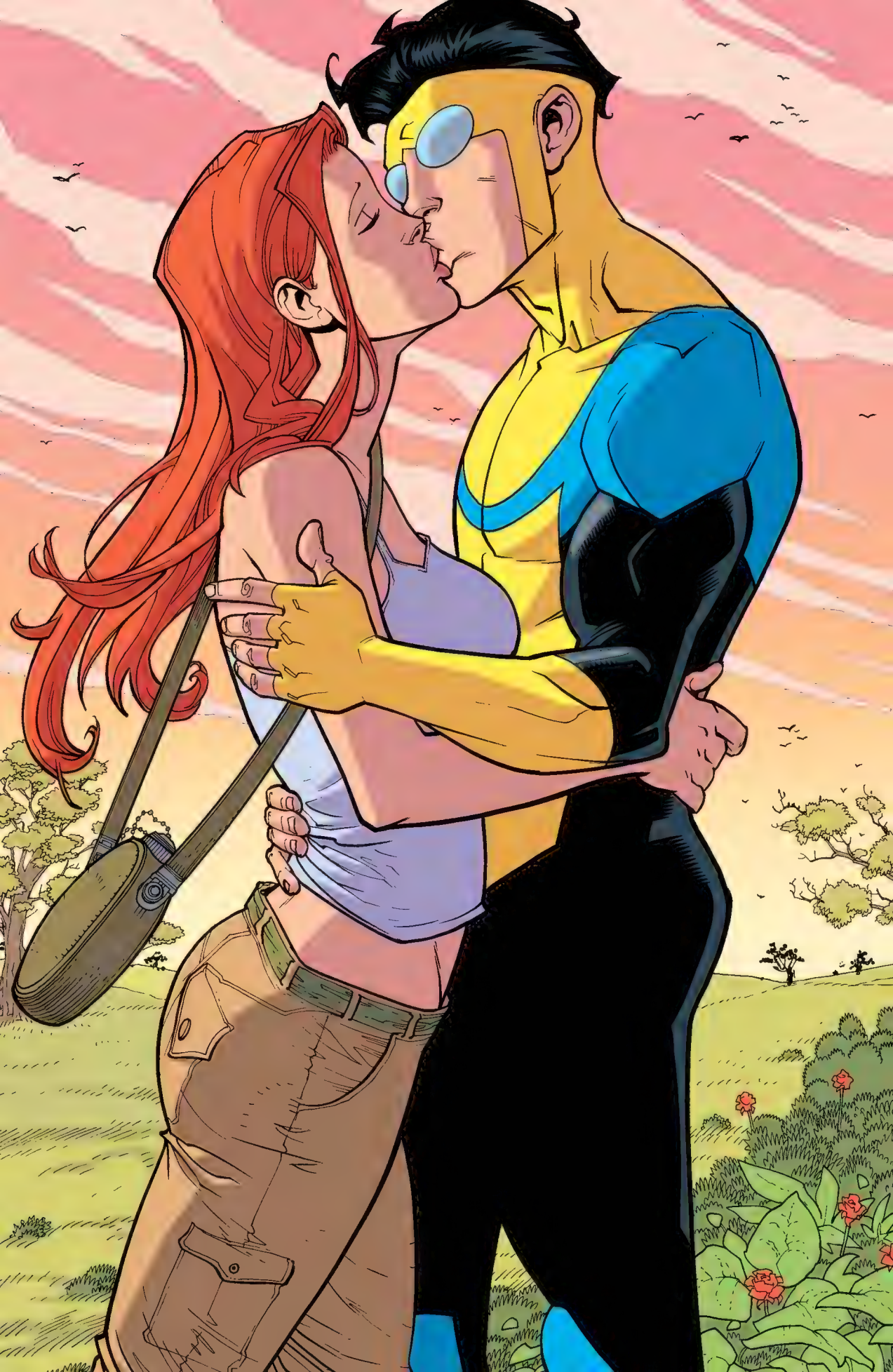
THIS IS LIKE THE HAPPIEST DAY OF MY LIFE!

I KNOW I HAVEN'T KNOWN YOU OR BEEN A PART OF THIS TEAM VERY LONG--BUT YOU FEEL LIKE FAMILY TO ME. I'M JUST GLAD TO SEE EVERYONE SO HAPPY.

EVER SINCE I GOT THESE POWERS-- AFTER NASA DID THEIR TESTING ON ME--I'VE FELT ISOLATED--ALONE. BUT NOT ANY MORE--NOT AT ALL.

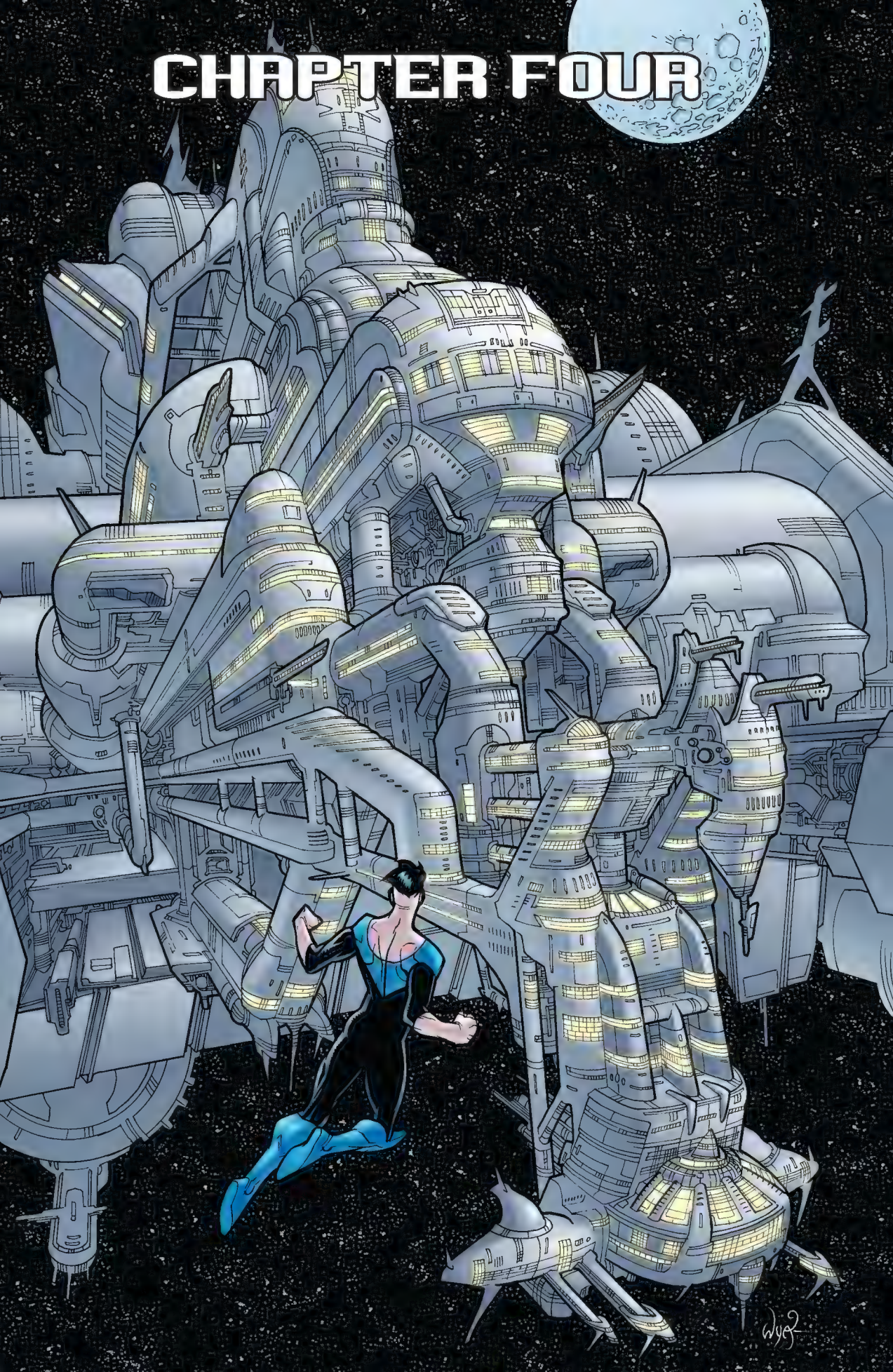








CHAPTER FOUR



I'M SORRY, GUYS...
I REALLY AM. I
HAVEN'T EXACTLY
BEEN HONEST
WITH YOU.

I DIDN'T GET
THESE POWERS
FROM UNAUTHORIZED
TESTING NASA
SUBJECTED ME TO.
I'VE ALWAYS HAD
THESE POWERS--
BECAUSE EVERYONE
ON MY PLANET
HAS THESE
POWERS.

I'M
FROM
MARS.

WHAT?!

I KNOW, I DID SOMETHING
TERRIBLE BY LYING TO YOU.
IF YOU WANT TO KICK ME
OFF THE TEAM--I'LL
UNDERSTAND.

THAT COMES LATER.
FOR NOW--WHAT DO YOU
KNOW ABOUT THIS SHIP
HEADED FOR EARTH?
ANYTHING?

ACTUALLY,
SIR... I THINK
I KNOW
EVERYTHING.



EVERY BOY ON MARS IS TOLD THIS STORY COUNTLESS TIMES SINCE BIRTH.

THEY WERE CALLED THE SEQUIDS. THEY CAME TO MARS CENTURIES AGO ON A DAMAGED VESSEL WHICH CRASH LANDED ON THE PLANET. THEY WERE HOSTILE.

THEY WAGED WAR WITH THE MARTIANS-- A BATTLE THAT RAGED FOR NEARLY A CENTURY. IT ENDED ONLY WHEN THE SEQUIDS' HOSTS DIED OF OLD AGE.


YOU SEE-- WE DIDN'T KNOW THIS BUT THE WARRIORS WHO FELL TO OUR PLANET WERE THE PARASITIC CREATURES ATTACHED TO THE HUMANIDS-- NOT THE HUMANIDS THEMSELVES.

THE SEQUIDS WERE A PARASITIC RACE--DEPENDENT ON A HOST OR HOSTS TO LINK THEIR **ONE-MIND**. WITHOUT A HOST THEY ARE NEARLY MINDLESS DRONES, ABLE TO PERFORM SIMPLE TASKS, BUT NOT CAPABLE OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT.

THEY TRIED TO BOND WITH MARTIANS, BUT DUE TO OUR NATURAL SHAPE-SHIFTING CAPABILITIES--BONDING WITH US WAS IMPOSSIBLE.


WITH THEIR HOSTS DEAD--THE SEQUIDS WERE NOW **MINDLESS**, AND THE MARTIANS UTILIZED THEIR ENEMY--EVENTUALLY ESTABLISHING THEM AS A **SLAVE RACE** THAT ASSISTED MARTIANS IN DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES.





THAT IS THE STORY
WE WERE TOLD.

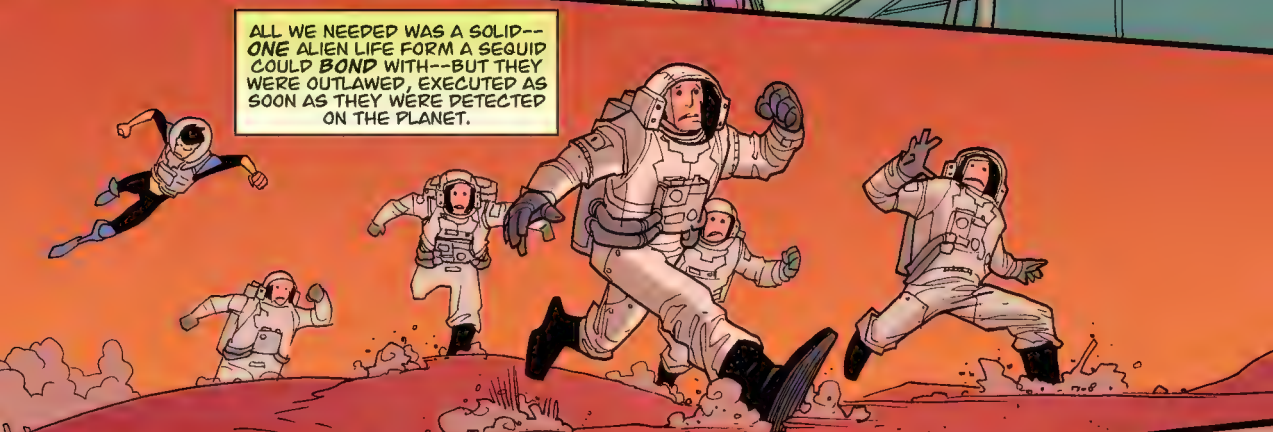
NOT ALL OF US BELIEVED
IT. THERE WERE SOME AMONG
US WHO BELIEVED A DIFFERENT
STORY ENTIRELY. THERE WAS
AN UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT
THAT WANTED TO FREE THE
SEQUIDS. I WAS PART OF
THAT MOVEMENT.



OVER THE YEARS THE
SEQUIDS HAD BEEN
BRED TO BE STRONGER,
ABLE TO DO MORE
WORK--AND TO WORK
MORE EFFICIENTLY.

THE SEQUIDS WERE
TESTED--EXPERIMENTED
ON--ALL IN AN EFFORT TO
MAKE BETTER SLAVES.


THE REBEL MOVEMENT
BELIEVED THAT THE STORY
OF OUR TRIUMPH OVER THE
VIOLENT SEQUID RACE WAS
A STORY TOLD TO JUSTIFY
OUR GOVERNMENT'S
HORRIBLE ACTIONS
AGAINST THE SEQUIDS.



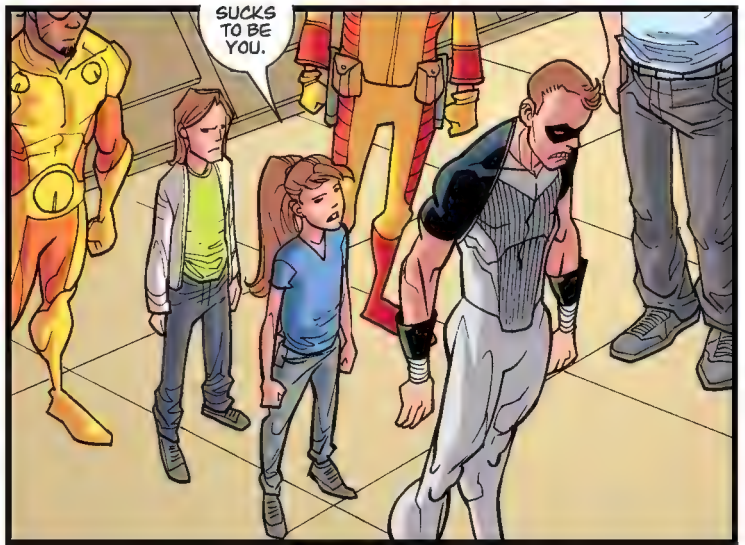
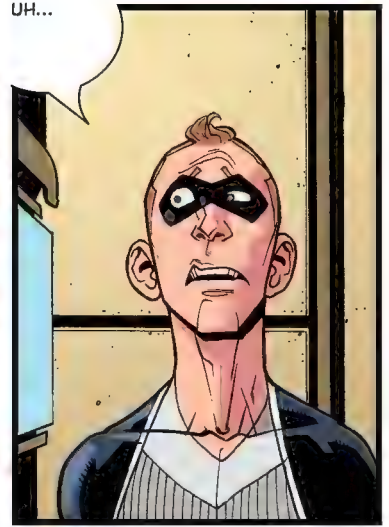
ALL WE NEEDED WAS A SOLID--
ONE ALIEN LIFE FORM A SEQUID
COULD BOND WITH--BUT THEY
WERE OUTLAWED, EXECUTED AS
SOON AS THEY WERE DETECTED
ON THE PLANET.

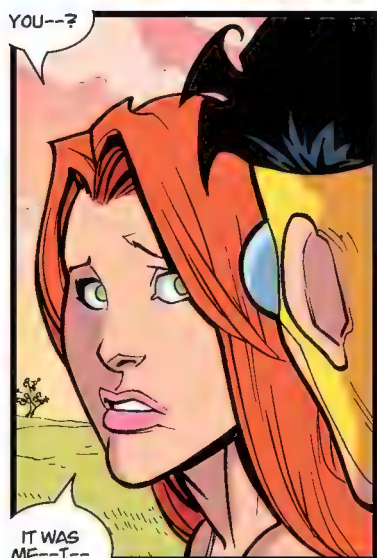
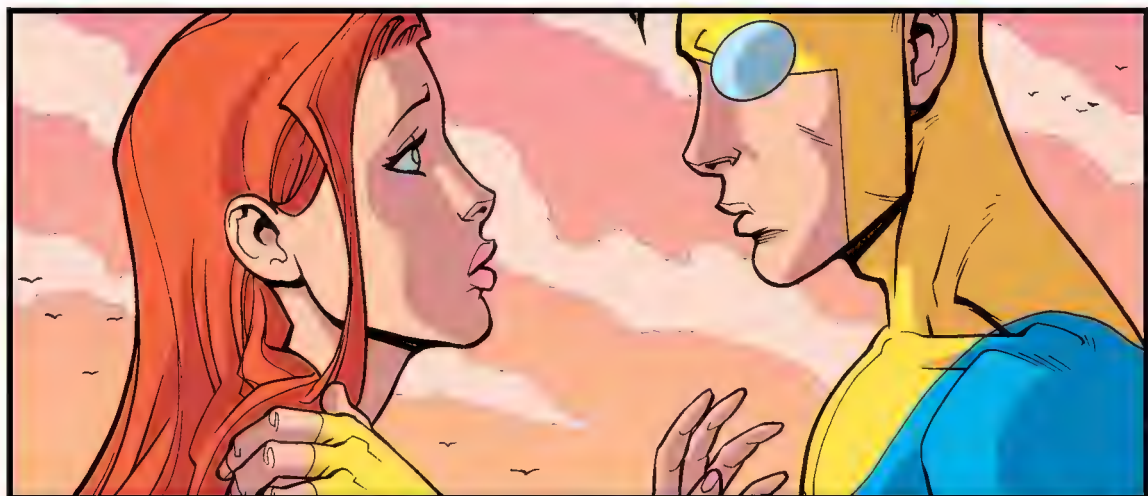
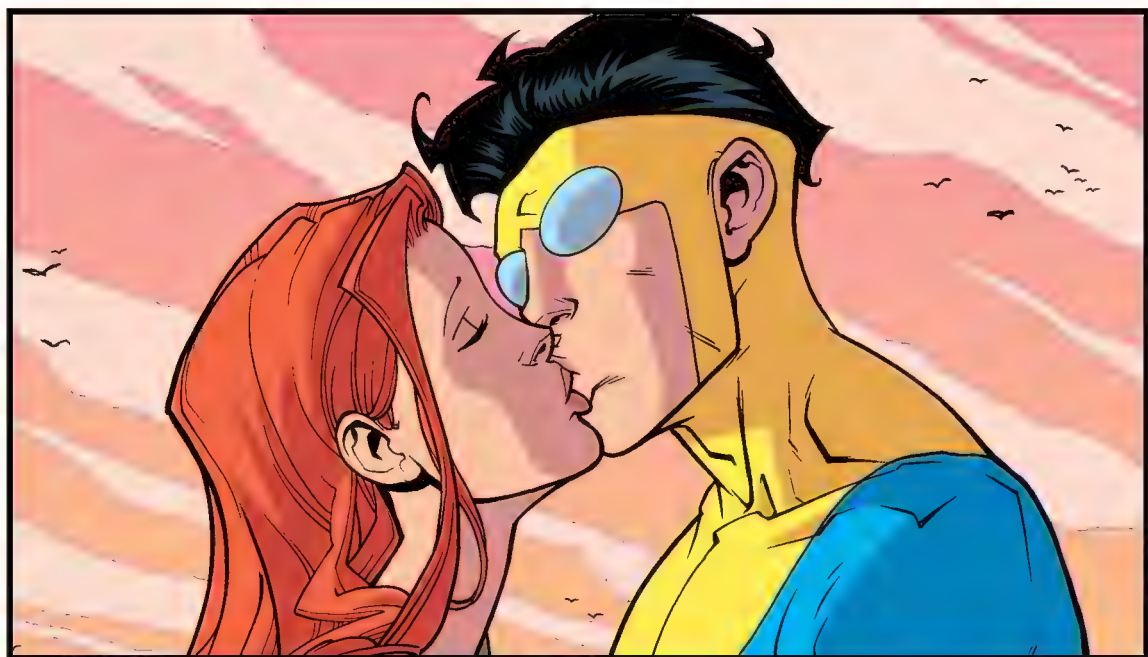
BUT WHEN THE NASA
EXPEDITION FROM EARTH
CAME--WE KNEW WE
HAD OUR CHANCE--AND
WE TOOK IT.

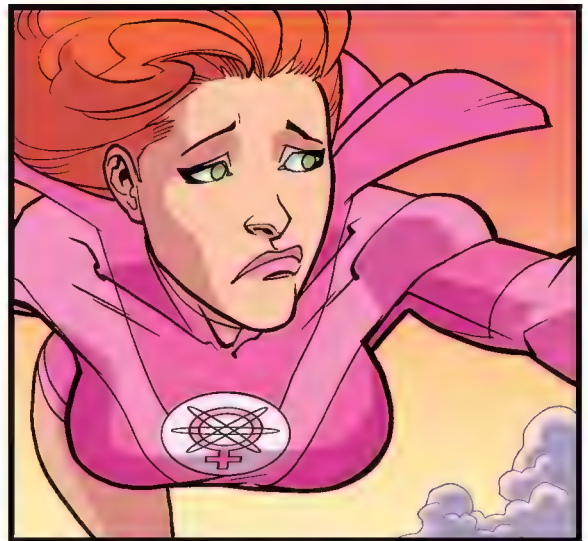
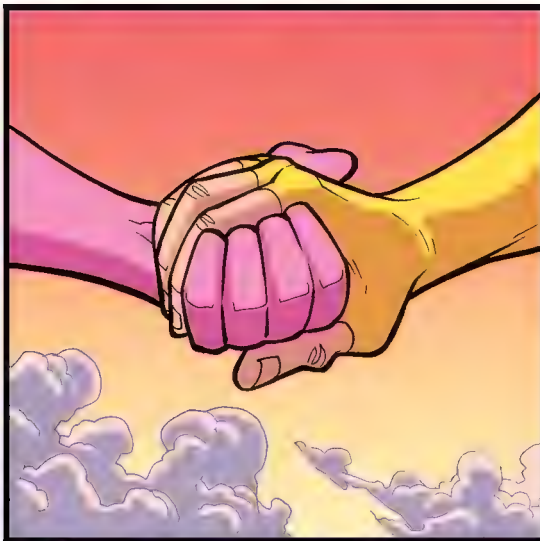
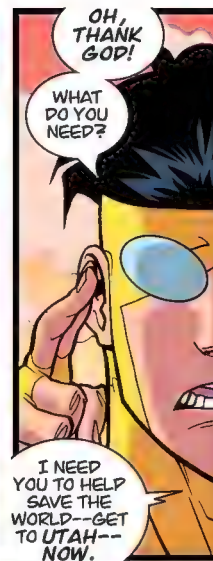
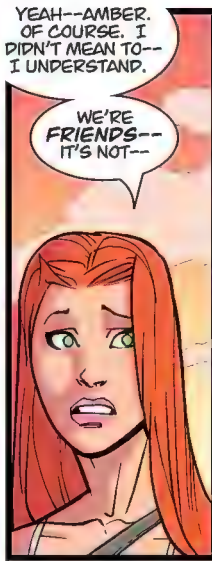
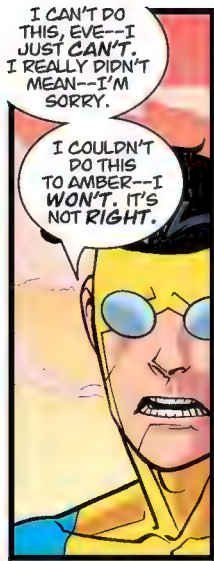
I WAS SENT TO
EARTH IN THE PLACE
OF ASTRONAUT RUS
LIVINGSTON--AND
HE WAS LEFT ON
MARS.



LEFT TO BE
TAKEN OVER BY
THE SEQUIDS.







AN UNDISCLOSED
LOCATION IN UTAH.

THE SECRET MOUNTAIN
BASE OF THE GUARDIANS
OF THE GLOBE.

OKAY. WE'VE BEEN ABLE
TO LOOK OVER THE INFORMATION
SHAPESMITH HAS GIVEN US
AND REVIEW THE INFORMATION
INVINCIBLE GATHERED DURING
HIS ENCOUNTER WITH THE
MARTIANS AND THE **SEQUIDS**
A FEW MONTHS
BACK.

WE'VE GOT
A **STRIKE TEAM**
TO ASSEMBLE, PEOPLE.
WE'RE GOING OUT INTO
SPACE AND WE'RE GOING
TO **STOP** THIS VESSEL
BEFORE THEY BECOME
A THREAT. BECAUSE
IF THESE CREATURES
REACH EARTH--

--IT'S ALL
OVER.

I'VE
ALREADY MADE
MY CHOICES.
THERE WILL BE
NO EXCEPTIONS
MADE--MY
DECISIONS ARE
FINAL.

BECAUSE OF THE ABILITY
OF THE **SEQUIDS** TO TAKE
CONTROL OVER OUR BODIES--
ONLY THOSE WITH SKIN TOO
STRONG FOR THEM TO
BREAK THROUGH WILL BE
GOING ALONG.

SO THAT'S
ROBOT, MONSTER
GIRL, THE IMMORTAL,
BULLETPROOF AND
BLACK SAMSON.

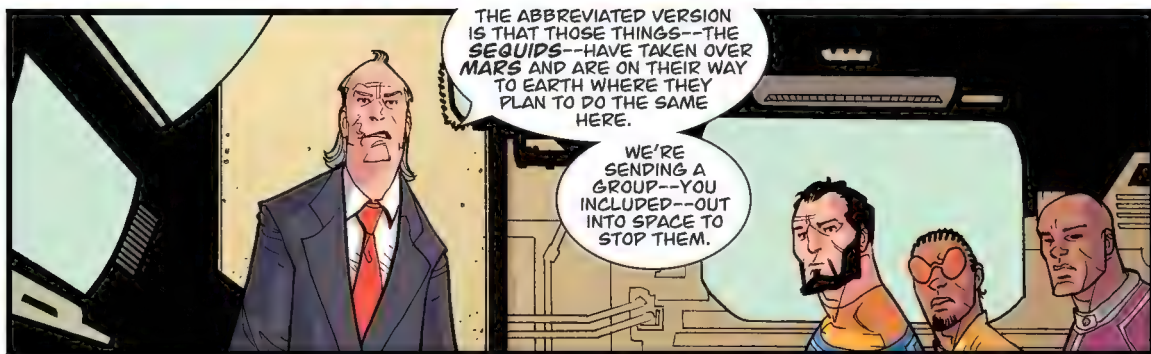
REX **SPLODE**,
DUPLI-KATE AND
SHRINKING RAY
WILL BE SITTING
THIS ONE
OUT.

I'LL HAVE
TO STAY IN
MONSTER FORM
THE WHOLE TIME,
I SUPPOSE.

OH, THIS
STINKS. I DON'T
WANT TO BE AWAY
FROM MY HUSBAND
SO SOON AFTER
OUR WEDDING.

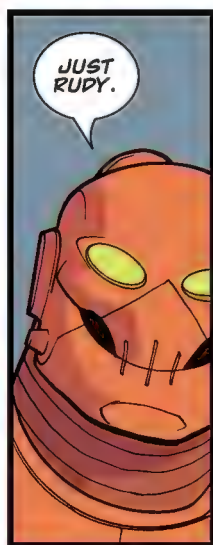
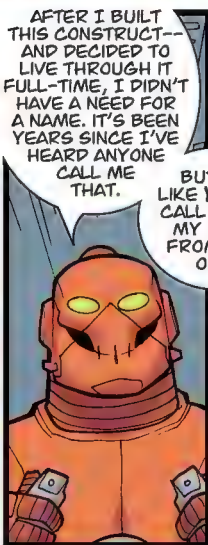
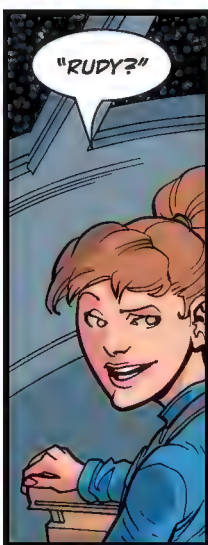
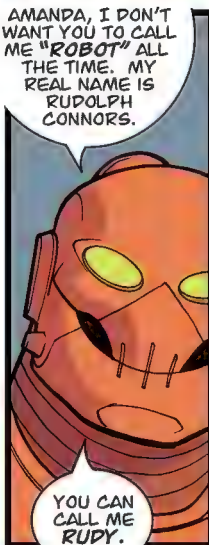
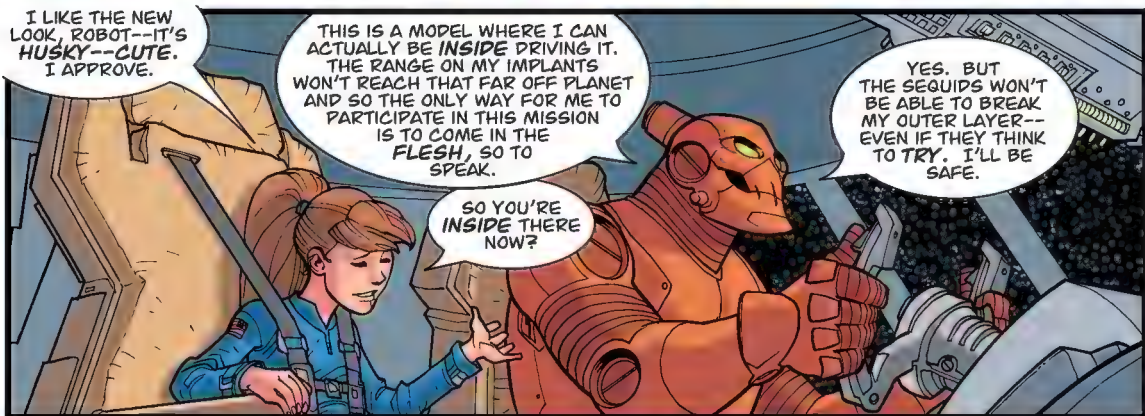
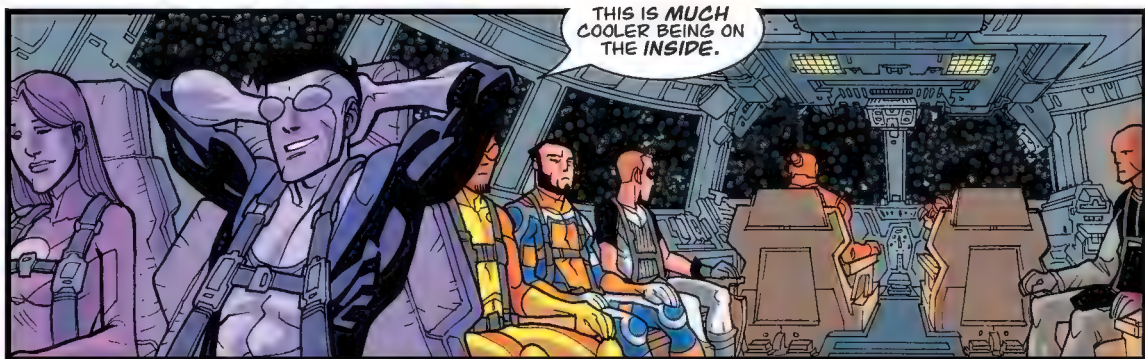
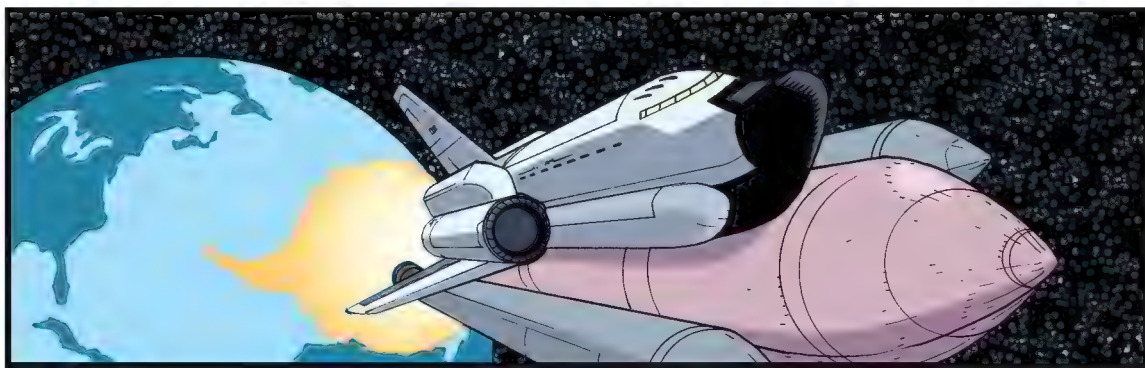
SO THAT'S
IT THEN--I'M
JUST SIDELINED?
THAT'S
GREAT.

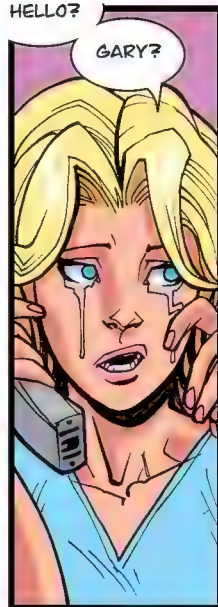
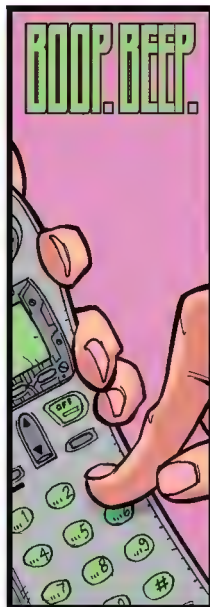
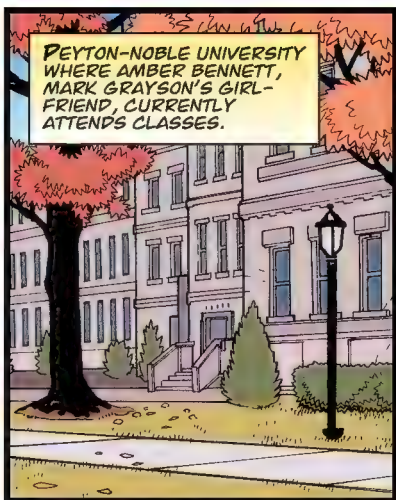




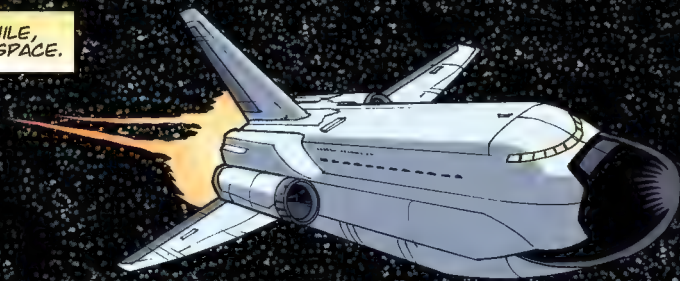
VOOOOSH!!



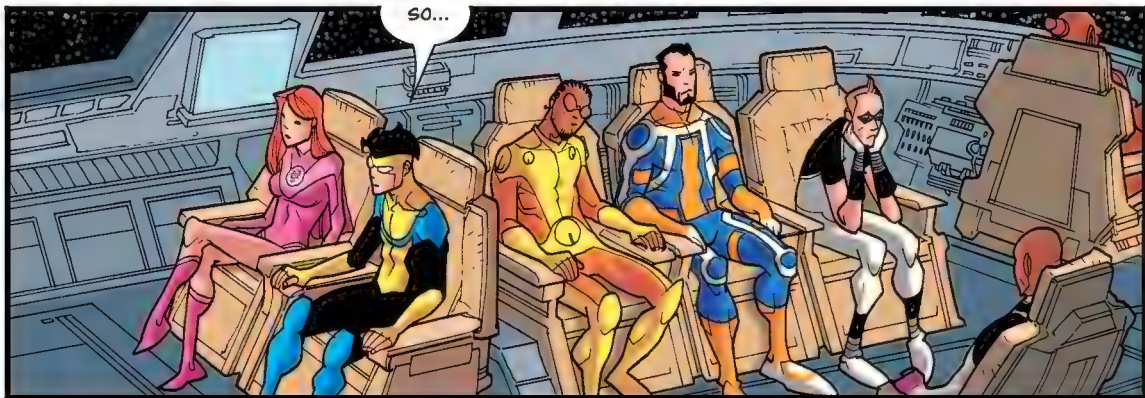




MEANWHILE,
DEEP IN SPACE.



SO...

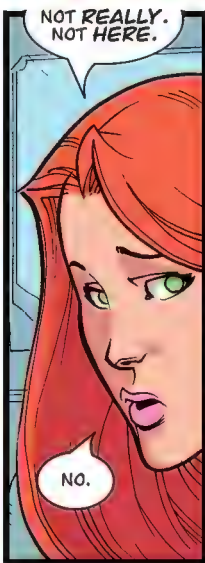


YOU, UH...
WANT TO TALK
ABOUT IT?



NOT REALLY.
NOT HERE.

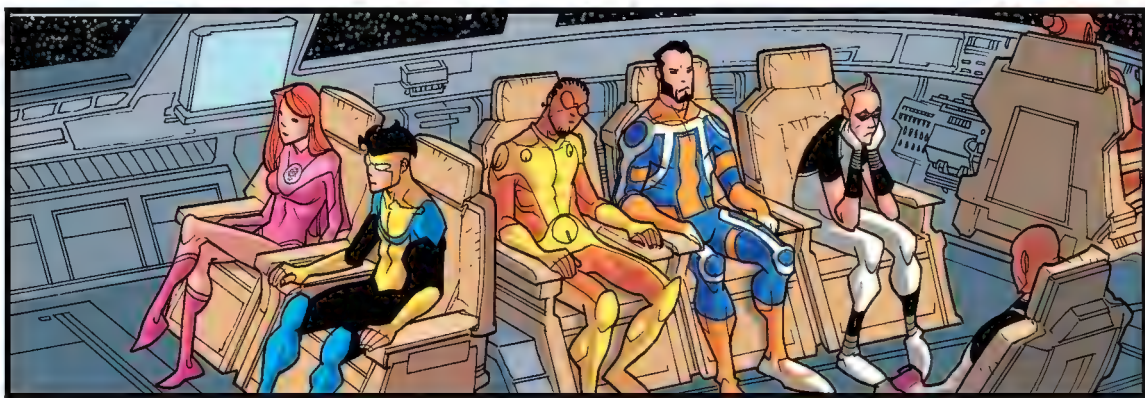
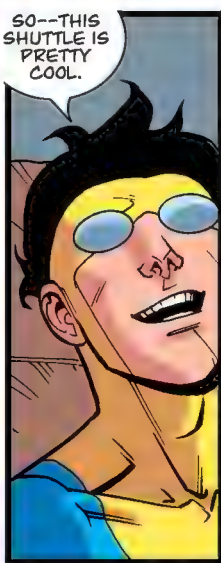
NO.

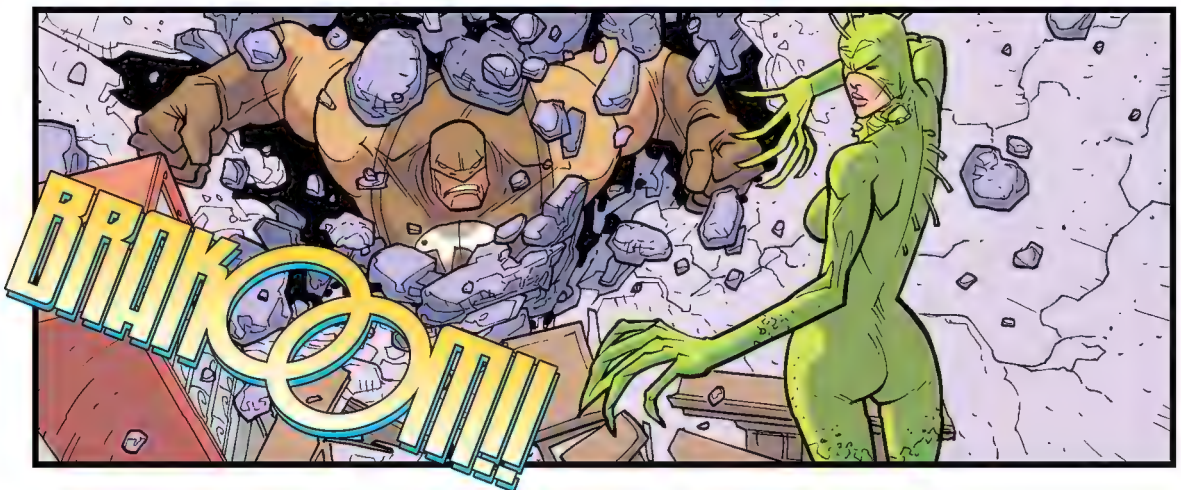
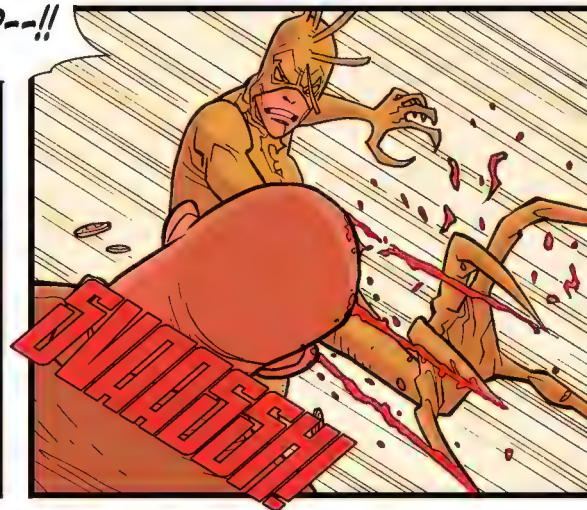
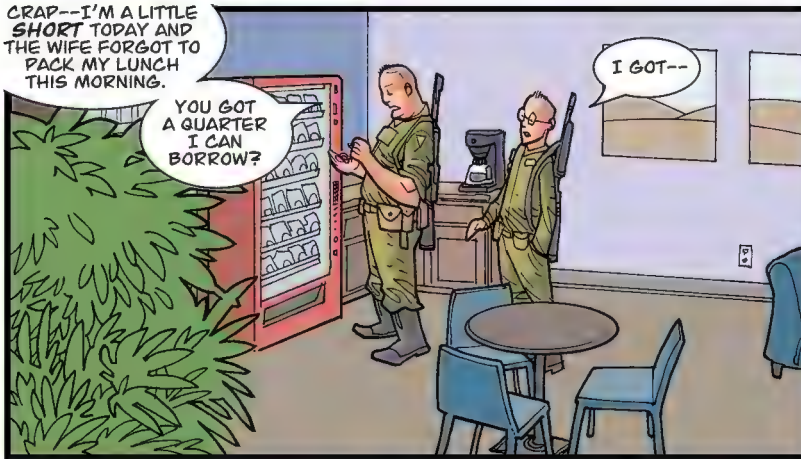
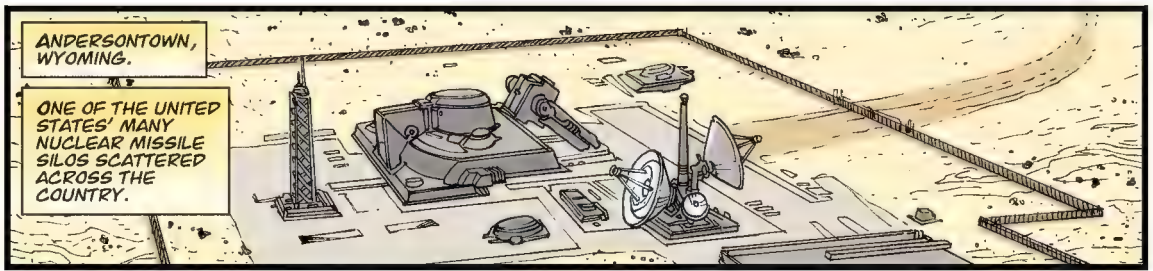


OKAY.



SO--THIS
SHUTTLE IS
PRETTY
COOL.







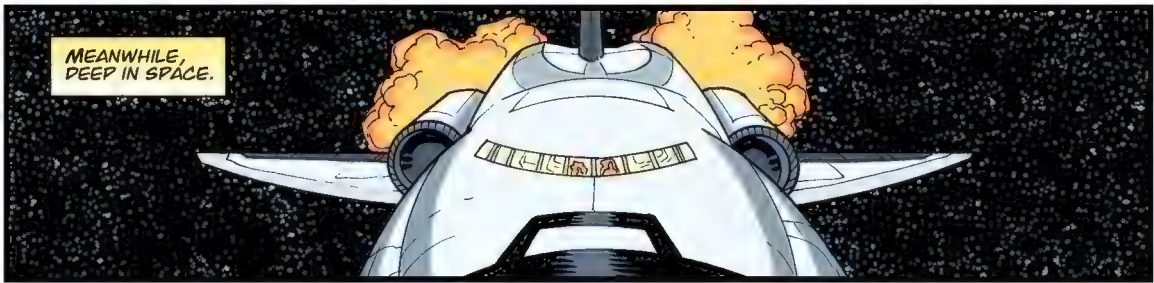
THIS IS A REMOTE OUTPOST--SECURITY IS TIGHT, YES--BUT THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TROOPS ON HAND TO WITHSTAND OUR FORCES! BY THE TIME REINFORCEMENTS CAN BE SENT OUT WE WILL HAVE ALREADY SECURED THE SITE.

IT'S TOO LATE FOR THEM TO STOP US-- THERE'S NOTHING THEY CAN DO.

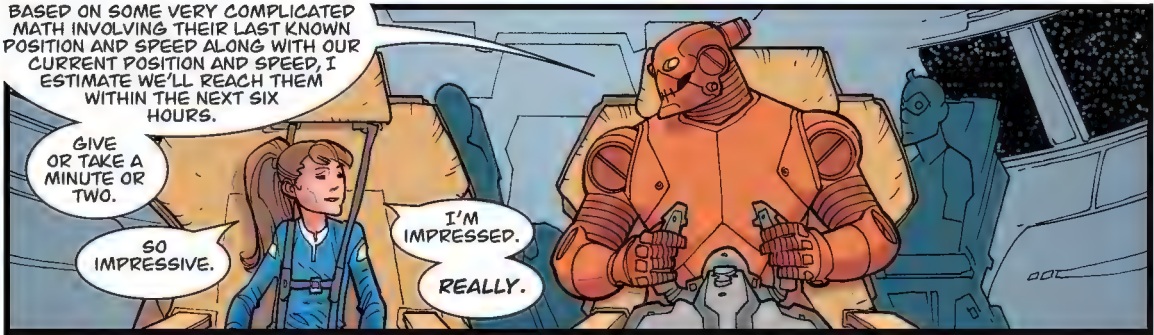
IN A MATTER OF MINUTES WE'LL HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL OF THIS SILO--IN A MATTER OF MINUTES--

THE LIZARD LEAGUE GOES NUCLEAR!





MEANWHILE,
DEEP IN SPACE.



BASED ON SOME VERY COMPLICATED MATH INVOLVING THEIR LAST KNOWN POSITION AND SPEED ALONG WITH OUR CURRENT POSITION AND SPEED, I ESTIMATE WE'LL REACH THEM WITHIN THE NEXT SIX HOURS.

GIVE OR TAKE A MINUTE OR TWO.

SO IMPRESSIVE.

I'M IMPRESSED.
REALLY.



SHAPESMITH--WHAT KIND OF RESISTANCE CAN WE EXPECT? WHAT ARE THE WEAPONS CAPABILITIES OF YOUR PEOPLE? ASSUMING THEY'RE WORKING WITH THE SEQUIDS NOW. AND WHAT ARE THE SEQUIDS' ABILITIES?

I'M NOT REALLY SURE. ASIDE FROM MIND CONTROL AND THEIR PSYCHIC LINK TO EACH OTHER-- I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY CAN DO. THEY'RE STRONG FOR THEIR SIZE--MY PEOPLE HAD THEM DOING ALL KINDS OF HARD LABOR.

IF THEY'RE IN A WARSHIP--WHICH IS THE ONLY THING AS BIG AS THE VESSEL YOU'VE DETECTED IN THE MARTIAN FLEET--AT LEAST SOME MARTIANS HAVE TO BE WORKING WITH THEM. THEY WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO OPERATE IT ON THEIR OWN.

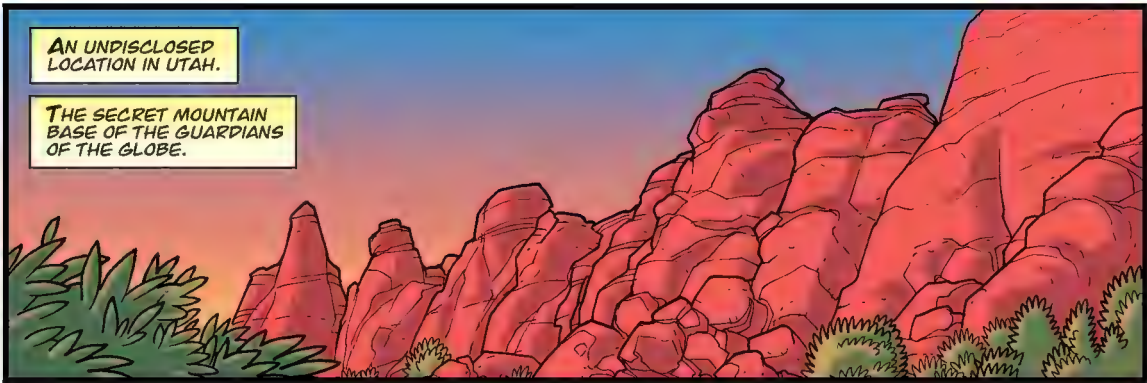


THEY'D HAVE TO HAVE SOME KIND OF PHYSICAL ABILITIES IN ORDER TO FORCE MARTIAN SOLDIERS TO WORK WITH THEM. THEY WOULDN'T JUST SURRENDER TO SEQUID CONTROL.

THOSE WARSHIPS ARE PACKED WITH ALL KINDS OF WEAPONS-- THEY'RE BAD NEWS. ONCE WE'RE IN THEIR SENSOR RANGE THEY'LL KNOW WE'RE COMING.



THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE EASY.



AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION IN UTAH.

THE SECRET MOUNTAIN BASE OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE.



GETTING-- LONELY?

NO-- NOT IN THE LEAST.

WELL, IF IT HAPPENS-- WHEN IT HAPPENS, LET ME KNOW. I CAN MAKE THE LONELINESS GO AWAY.

IT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.

HEH.



GOOD--YOU'RE STILL HERE. I'VE GOT A LIVE ONE FOR YOU.



WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S GOING ON?

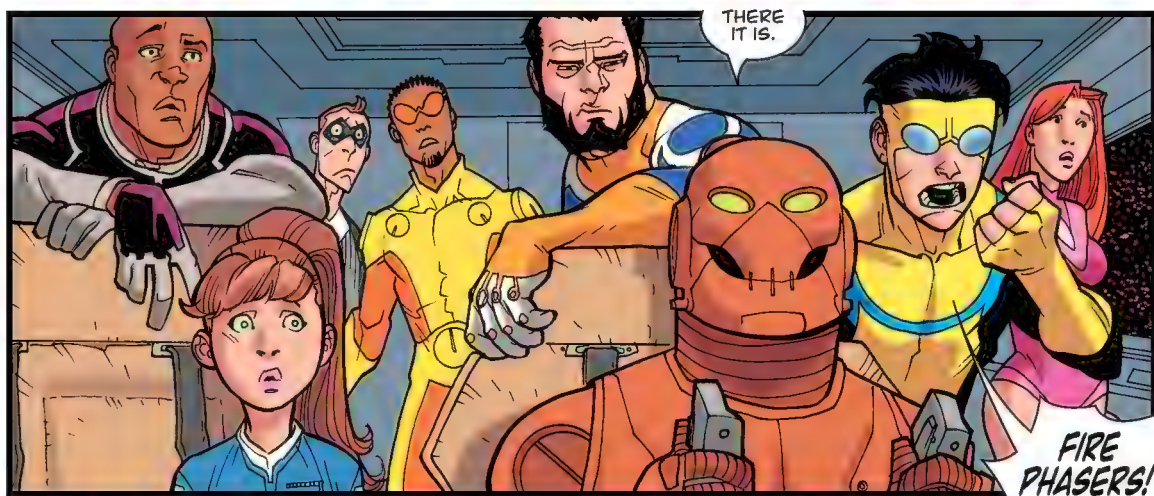
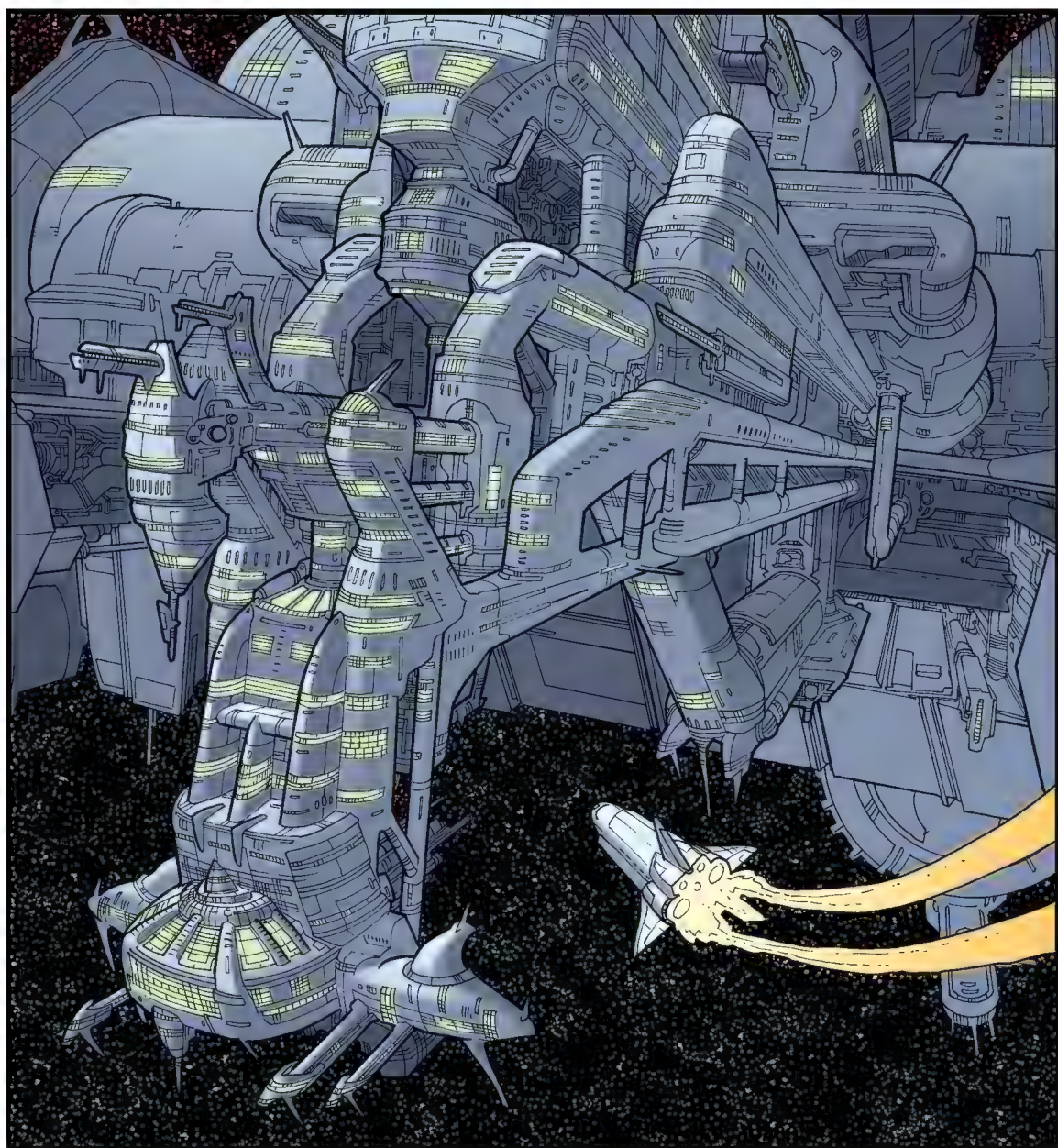
THE LIZARD LEAGUE HAS TAKEN OVER A MISSILE SILO IN WYOMING--THEY'VE GOT THEIR FINGER ON THE BUTTON. WE DON'T YET KNOW WHAT THEIR TARGET IS BUT EVERY MAJOR CITY ON THE PLANET IS AT RISK.

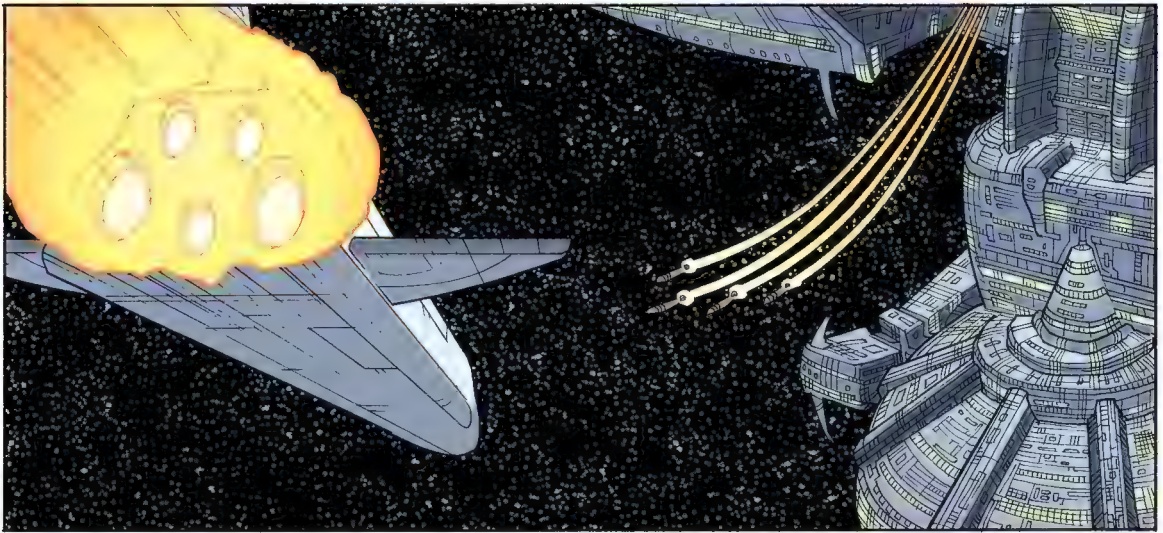
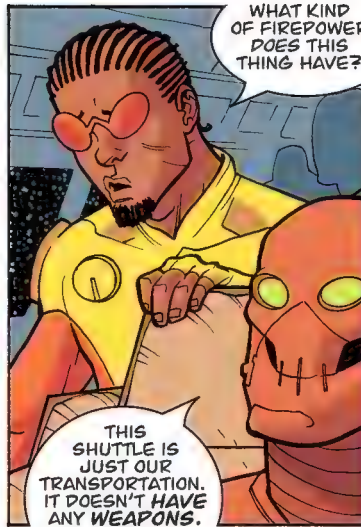
THE BEST PART IS THAT THIS MISSILE WILL HAVE U, S AND A WRITTEN ALL OVER IT. THEY HIT THE RIGHT PLACE AND THEY TRIGGER WORLD WAR THREE.

WHICH MEANS EVEN IF YOUR TEAMMATES SUCCEED IN STOPPING THE SEQUID INVASION, IF THEY ARE ABLE TO STOP THEM--

THEY MAY NOT HAVE A PLANET TO RETURN HOME TO.





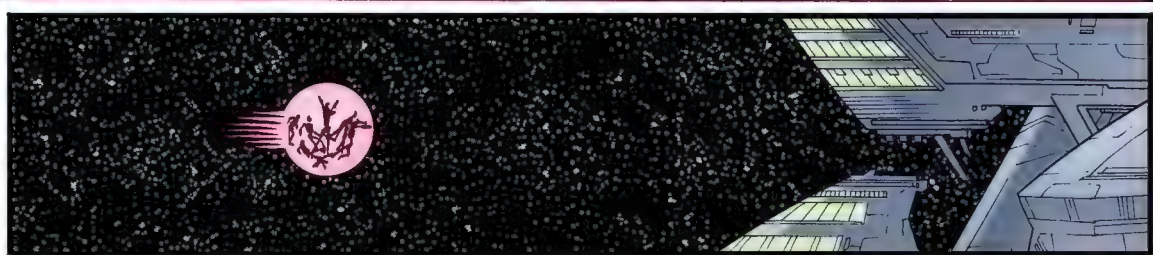


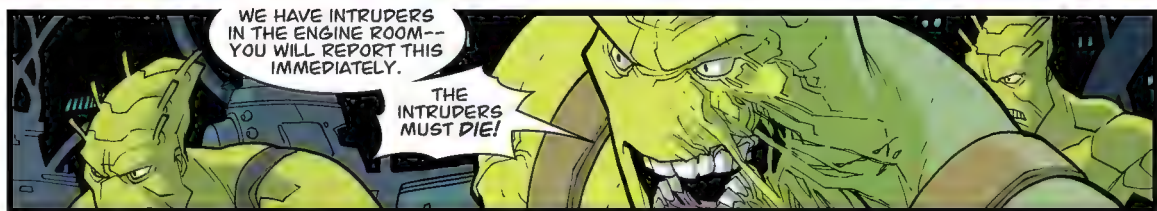




CHAPTER FIVE







SILENCE!



WHY DO YOU ATTACK US? IS IT TRUE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN OVERRUN BY THIS SLAVE RACE--THESE SEQUIPS?

ENSLAVED BY SLAVES, YES-- BECAUSE OF HIM!



AND WE ARE HERE TO STOP THEM-- BECAUSE OF HIM!

WILL YOU HELP US?

TO STOP THE VILE SEQUIPS WE WOULD ALLY WITH TRANSGROTH HIMSELF.



FIGHTING THE LACK OF PRESSURE IN SPACE-- I HAD TO KEEP PULLING ON THE GLOBE TO KEEP IT INTACT SO THE AIR DIDN'T LEAK OUT--AND SEALING UP THAT WALL--

I'VE NEVER USED MY POWERS ON THAT SCALE SO MUCH AT ONE TIME. I JUST--

I JUST NEED A MINUTE TO CATCH MY BREATH.

IT'S OKAY-- I GOT YOU.



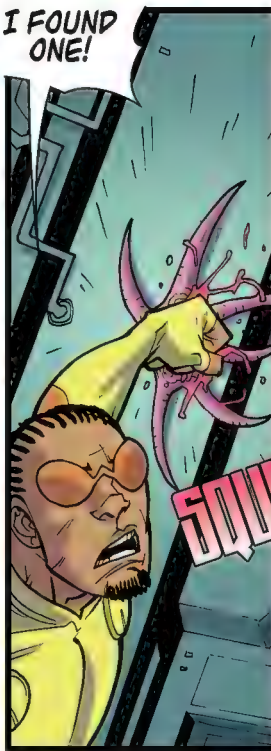
ARE YOU OKAY?

I'M FINE.

HEY, GUYS--



I FOUND ONE!



NO! YOU HAVE ALERTED THEM TO YOUR PRESENCE!

THEY WILL KNOW YOU ARE HERE IMMEDIATELY!





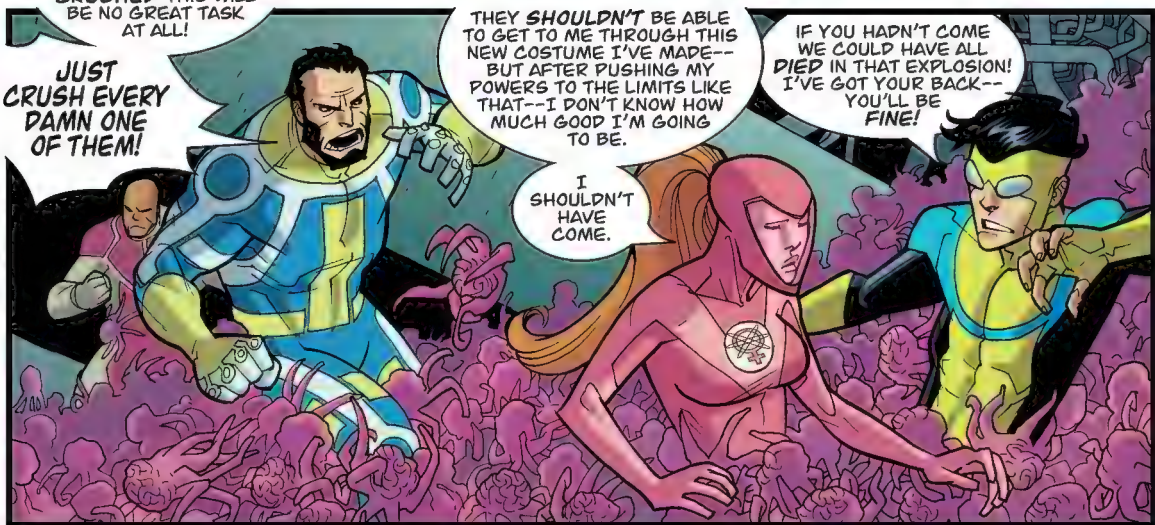
BULLETPROOF
HAS REVEALED
THEIR VULNERABILITY.
IF THESE CREATURES
CAN BE SO EASILY
CRUSHED THIS WILL
BE NO GREAT TASK
AT ALL!

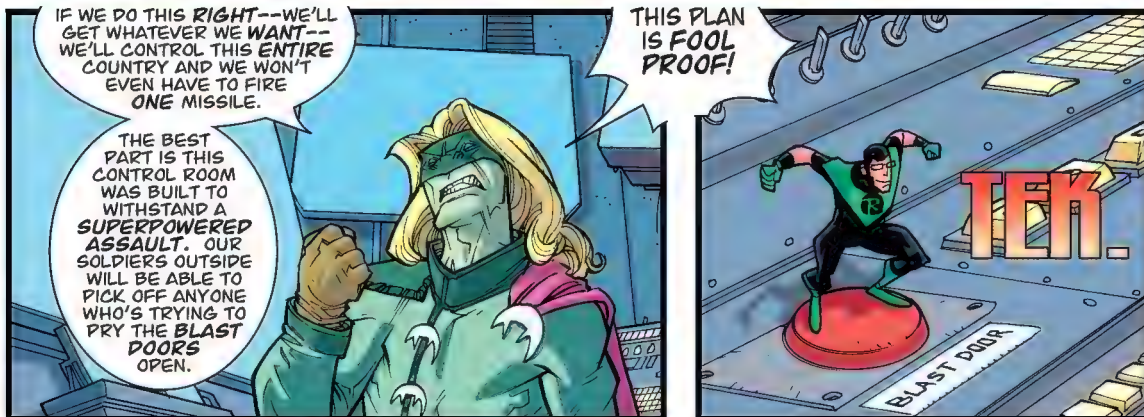
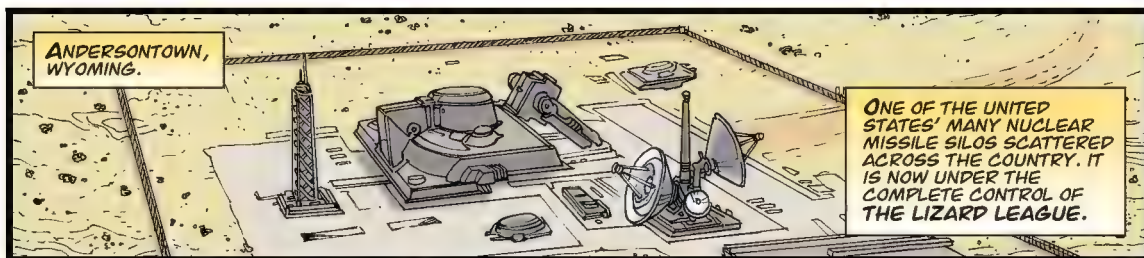
JUST
CRUSH EVERY
DAMN ONE
OF THEM!

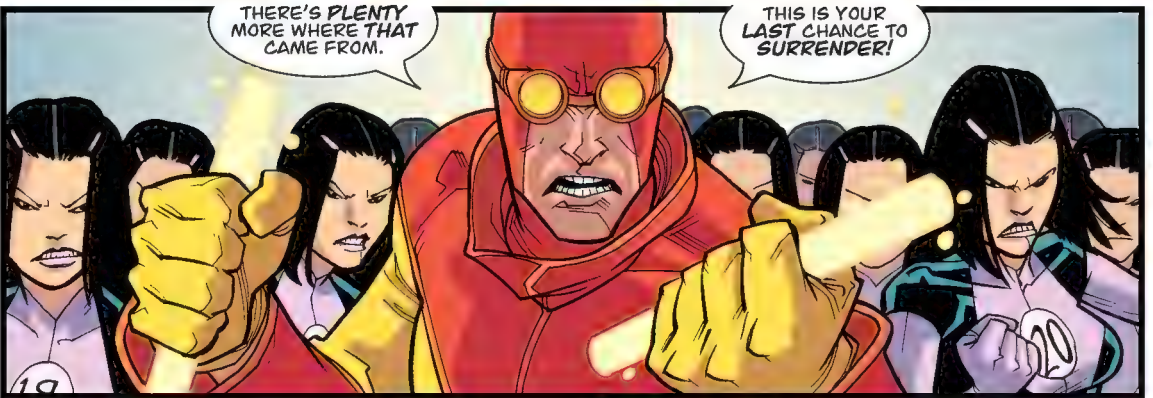
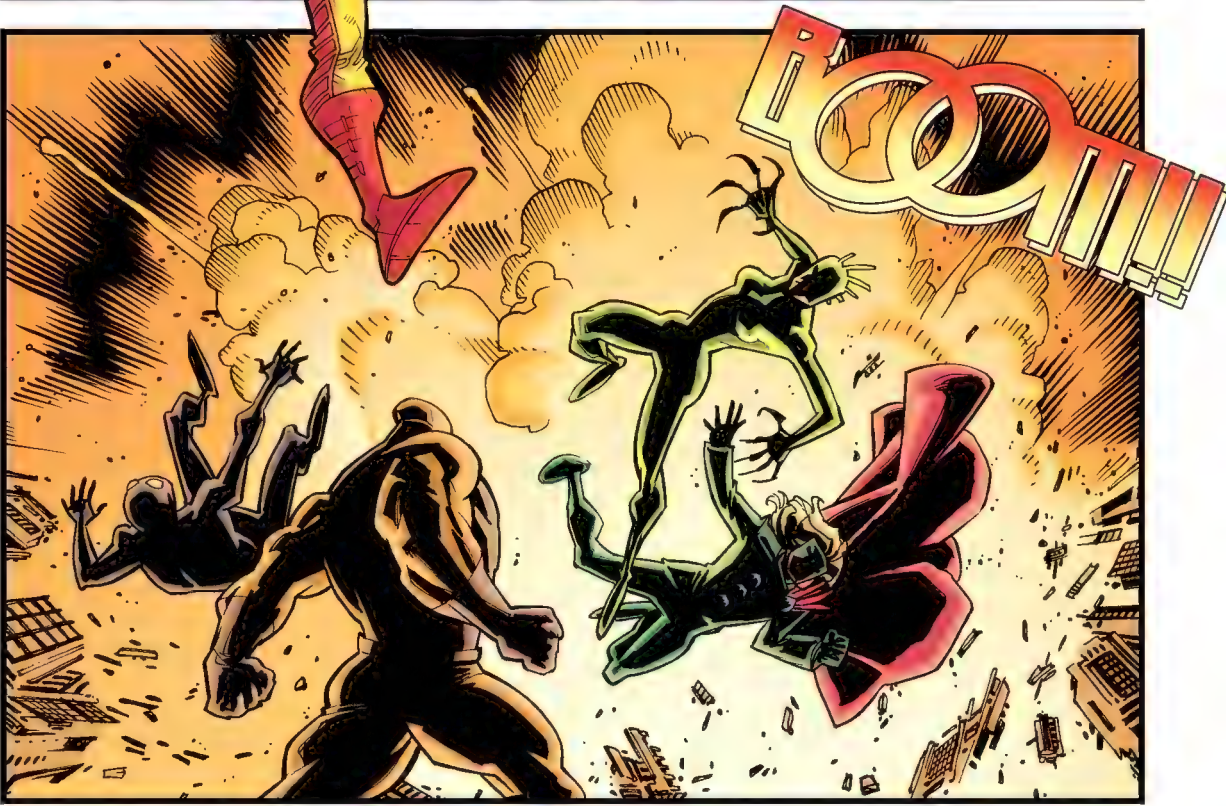
THEY SHOULDN'T BE ABLE
TO GET TO ME THROUGH THIS
NEW COSTUME I'VE MADE--
BUT AFTER PUSHING MY
POWERS TO THE LIMITS LIKE
THAT--I DON'T KNOW HOW
MUCH GOOD I'M GOING
TO BE.

I
SHOULDN'T
HAVE
COME.

IF YOU HADN'T COME
WE COULD HAVE ALL
DIED IN THAT EXPLOSION!
I'VE GOT YOUR BACK--
YOU'LL BE
FINE!



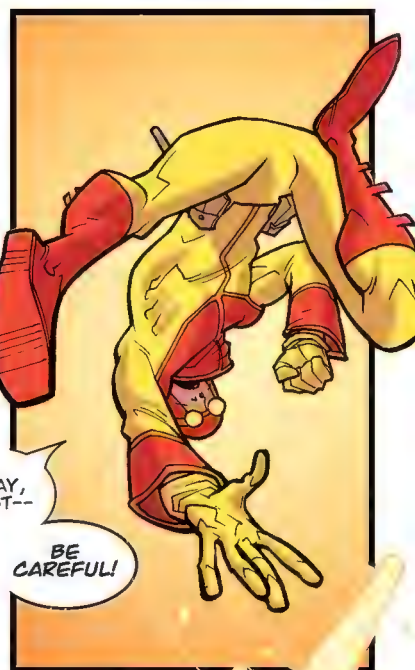




I RESPECTFULLY
DECLINE!



KATE!!



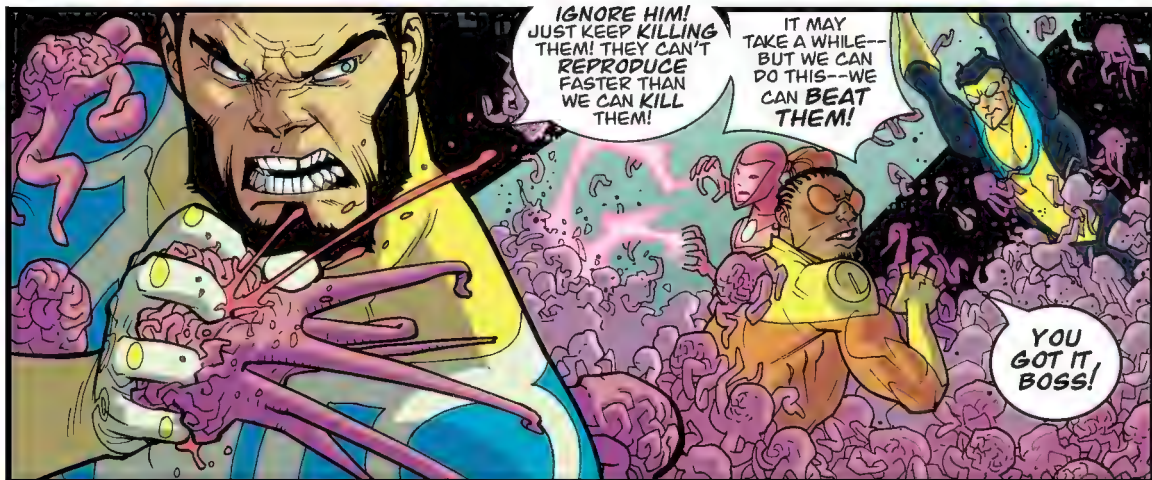


MEANWHILE--
OUT IN SPACE,
ABOARD THE
GIANT MARTIAN
WAR SHIP.

SOLIDS?!

SOLIDS
COME TO OPPOSE
US?! FOOLS! WE
ARE WANTING TO
FIND YOU--WE ARE
COMING TO YOU!
YOU NEED NOT
FIND US!

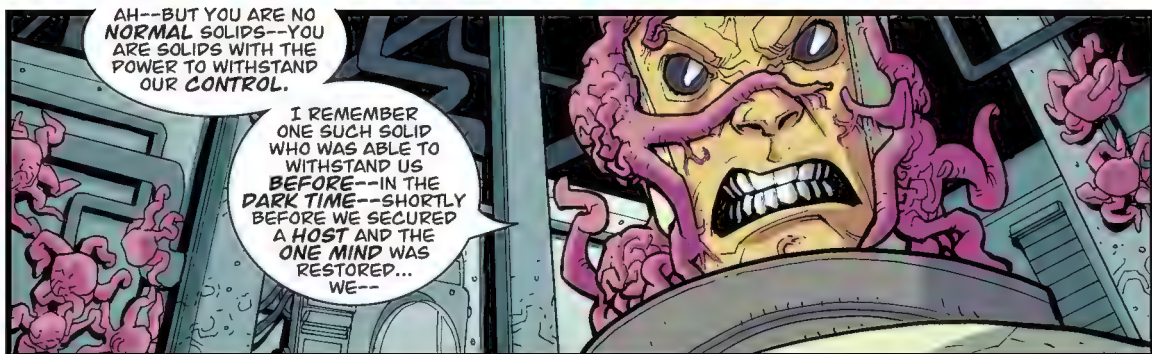
YOU ONLY
HASTEN YOUR
DEFEAT BY
COMING
HERE!



IGNORE HIM!
JUST KEEP KILLING
THEM! THEY CAN'T
REPRODUCE
FASTER THAN
WE CAN KILL
THEM!

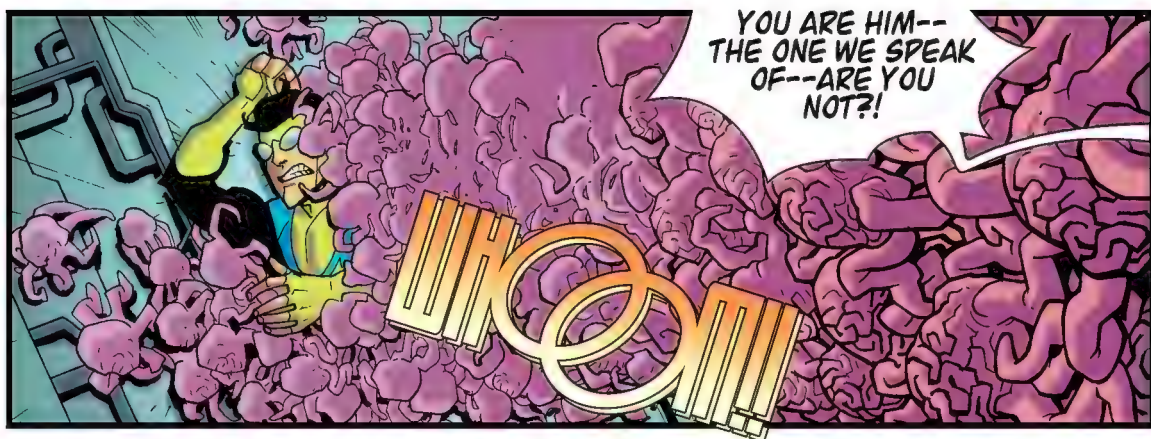
IT MAY
TAKE A WHILE--
BUT WE CAN
DO THIS--WE
CAN BEAT
THEM!

**YOU
GOT IT,
BOSS!**



AH--BUT YOU ARE NO
NORMAL SOLIDS--YOU
ARE SOLIDS WITH THE
POWER TO WITHSTAND
OUR CONTROL.

I REMEMBER
ONE SUCH SOLID
WHO WAS ABLE TO
WITHSTAND US
BEFORE--IN THE
DARK TIME--SHORTLY
BEFORE WE SECURED
A HOST AND THE
ONE MIND WAS
RESTORED...
WE--



YOU ARE HIM--
THE ONE WE SPEAK
OF--ARE YOU
NOT?!



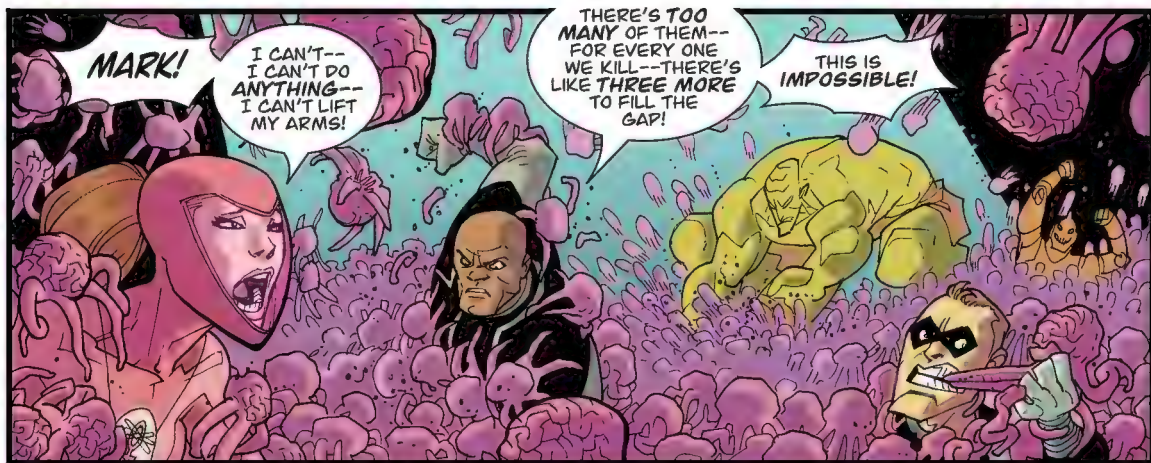
THAT'D BE ME--YEAH.
I'M NOT TOO KEEN ON
HOSTILE TAKEOVERS OF
MY PLANET. IT'S KIND
OF A THING I
HAVE.

IT'S NOTHING
PERSONAL.



STOP--YOU HAVE TO
STOP US? I ASSURE
YOU, SOLID--WE CANNOT
BE STOPPED. FOR
CENTURIES WE HAVE
DWELLED AIMLESSLY,
UNWARE OF EVEN OUR
OWN SLAVERY--
CENTURIES WE HAVE
EXISTED IN A HAZE--
MINDLESS.

WE WILL
NEVER
SUFFER
THAT FATE
AGAIN!



MARK!

I CAN'T--
I CAN'T DO
ANYTHING--
I CAN'T LIFT
MY ARMS!

THERE'S TOO
MANY OF THEM--
FOR EVERY ONE
WE KILL--THERE'S
LIKE THREE MORE
TO FILL THE
GAP!

THIS IS
IMPOSSIBLE!



I WILL REACH YOUR
PLANET--THE SOLID
PLANET--FORETOLD IN
THE DEPTHS OF THE
HOST'S MEMORY. WE
WILL SPREAD OUT
AMONG THIS WORLD
AS A GREAT
PLAGUE!

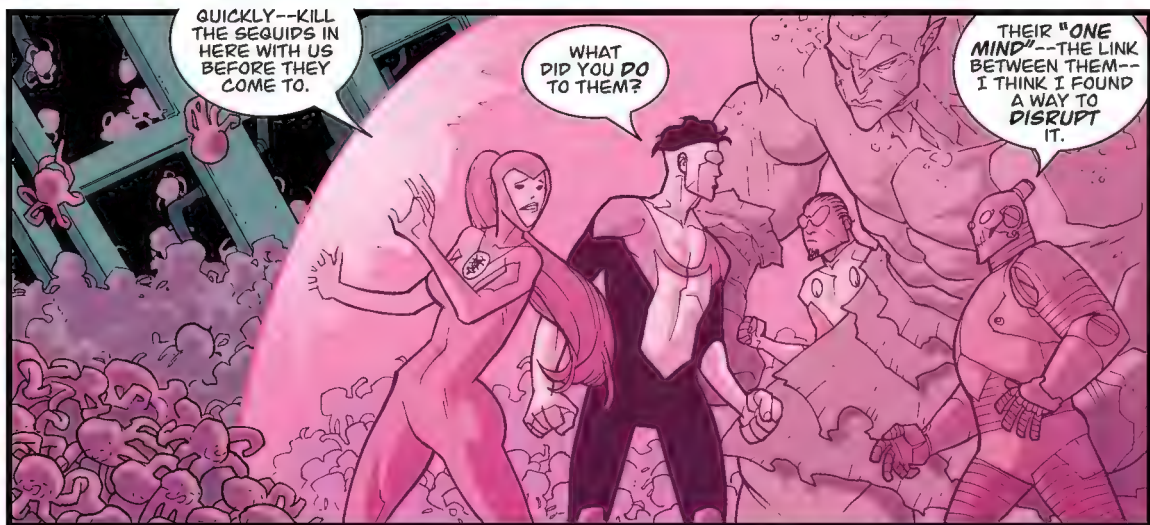
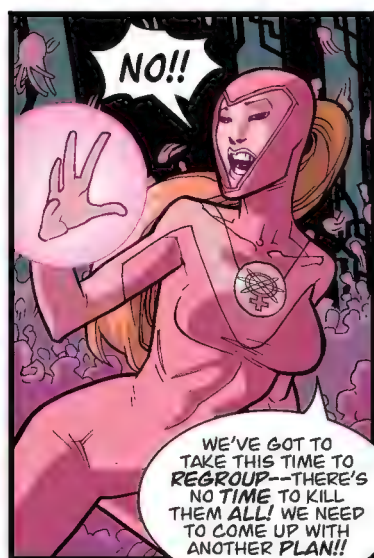
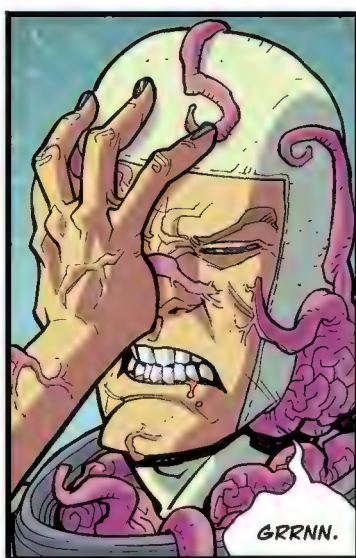
NOTHING
YOU CAN DO
WILL STOP
US!



IRK!!

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?!

TRYING TO
SEE IF THERE'S
SOMETHING
HE HASN'T
THOUGHT OF.



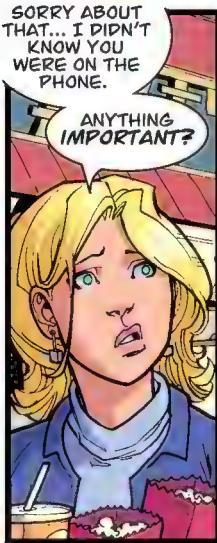


MEANWHILE, ON EARTH. AMBER BENNETT IS OUT SEEING A MOVIE WITH GARY--HER "FRIEND" FROM COLLEGE.

I GOT THE POPCORN AND THE DRINKS--LET'S GET IN THERE BEFORE ALL THE GOOD SEATS ARE TAKEN.

YEAH, NO, NO-- I UNDERSTAND. I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND.

OKAY-- BYE.



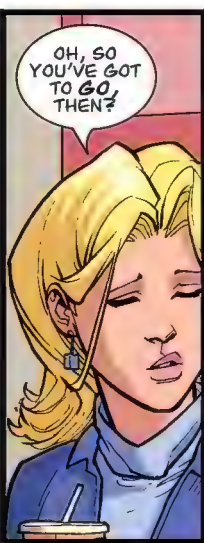
SORRY ABOUT THAT... I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE ON THE PHONE.

ANYTHING IMPORTANT?



WELL, THAT WAS MY BOSS FROM WORK. SOME GUYS UP AND QUIT TONIGHT...

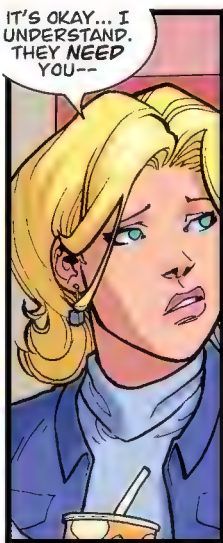
HE ASKED ME TO COME IN.



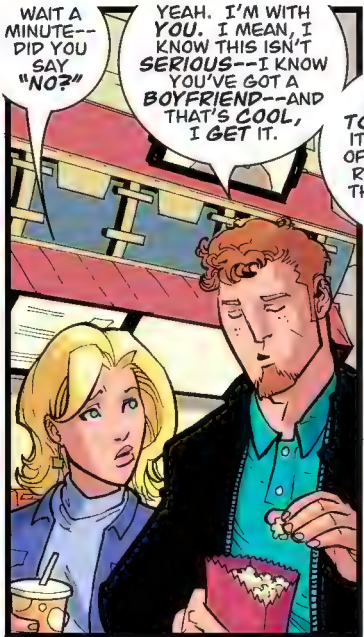
OH, SO YOU'VE GOT TO GO, THEN?



NO.



IT'S OKAY... I UNDERSTAND. THEY NEED YOU--



WAIT A MINUTE-- DID YOU SAY "NO?"

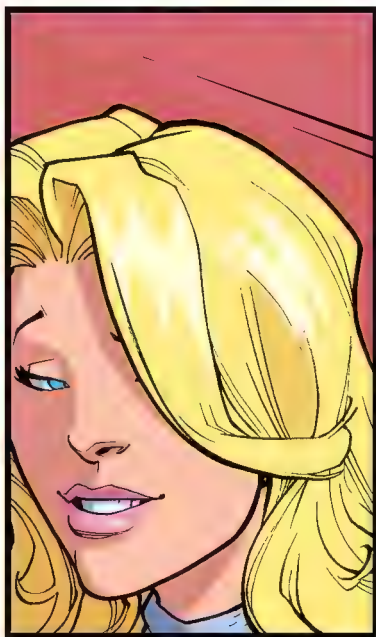
YEAH. I'M WITH YOU. I MEAN, I KNOW THIS ISN'T SERIOUS--I KNOW YOU'VE GOT A BOYFRIEND--AND THAT'S COOL, I GET IT.

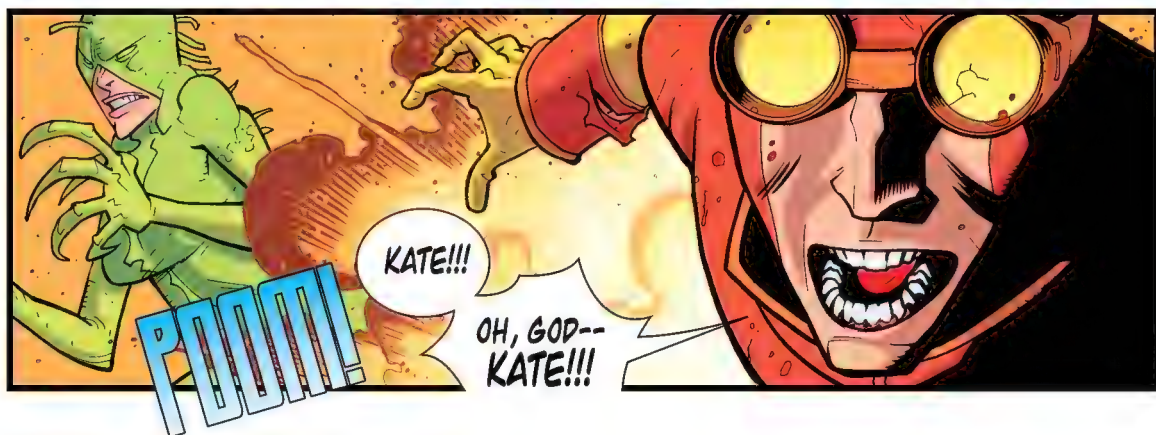
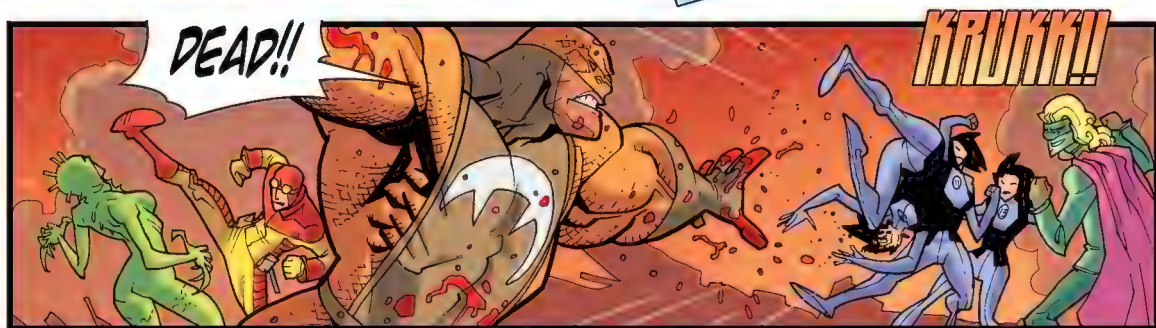
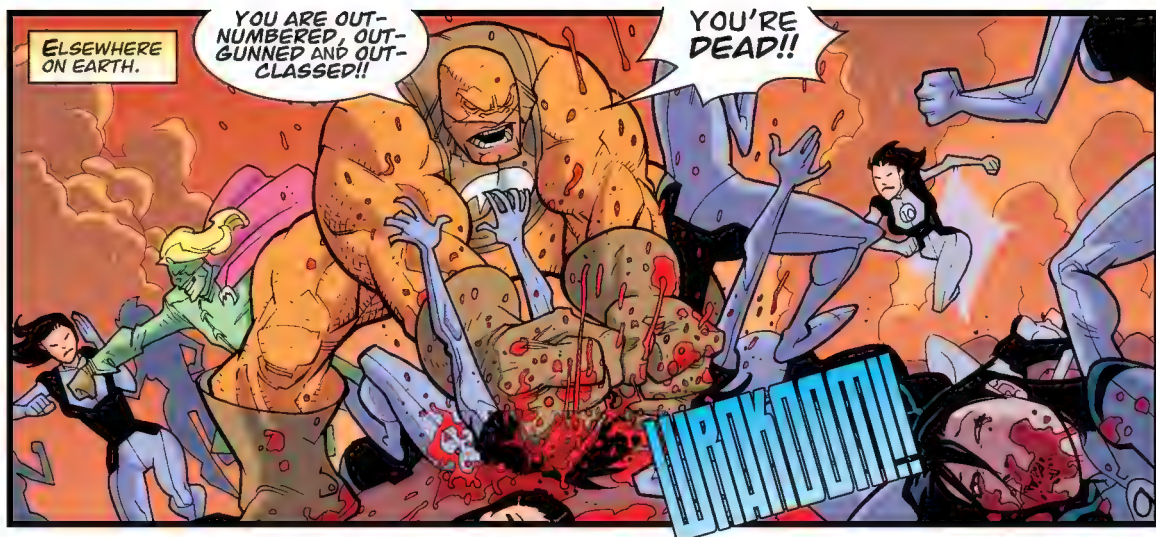


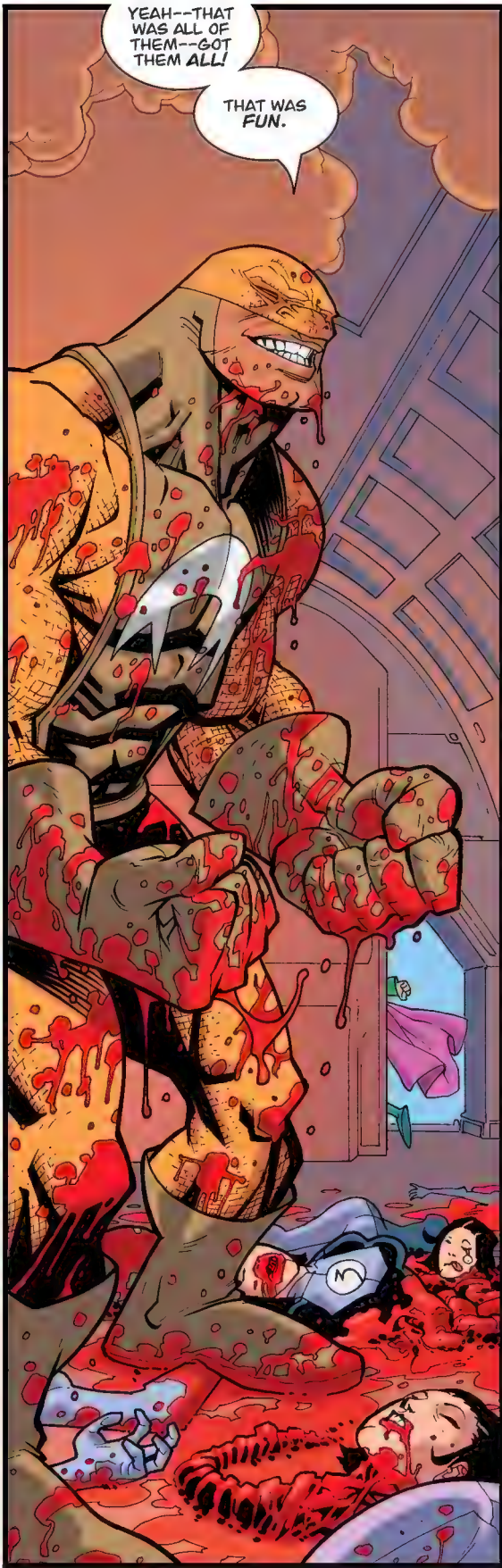
BESIDES--IT'S MY NIGHT OFF. THEY CAN FIND SOMEONE ELSE.

BUT WE'RE OUT TOGETHER--IT'D BE RUDE OF ME JUST TO RUN OFF LIKE THAT ALL OF A SUDDEN.

YEAH.

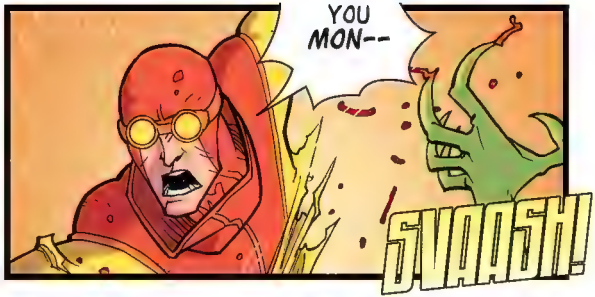






YEAH--THAT WAS ALL OF THEM--GOT THEM ALL!

THAT WAS FUN.



YOU MON--

SWASH!

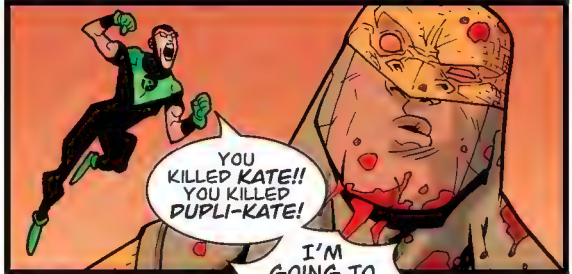


DON'T WORRY, RED--YOU'LL BE FOLLOWING HER SOON ENOUGH!



DON'T BE SO SURE!

WROKK!!



YOU KILLED KATE!!
YOU KILLED DUPLI-KATE!

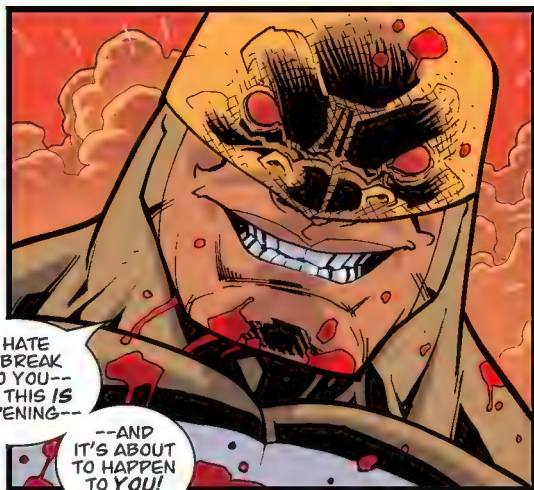
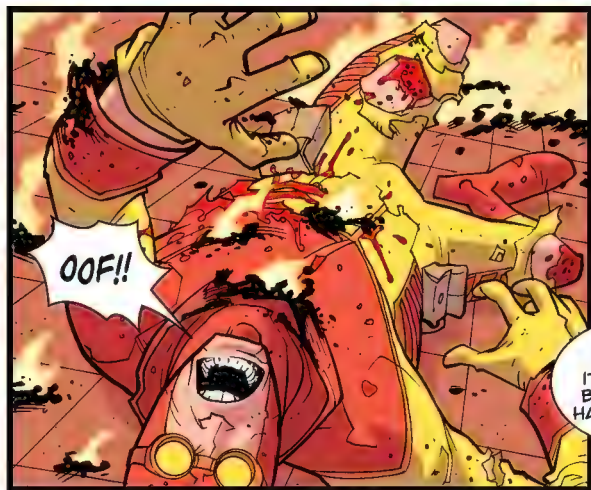
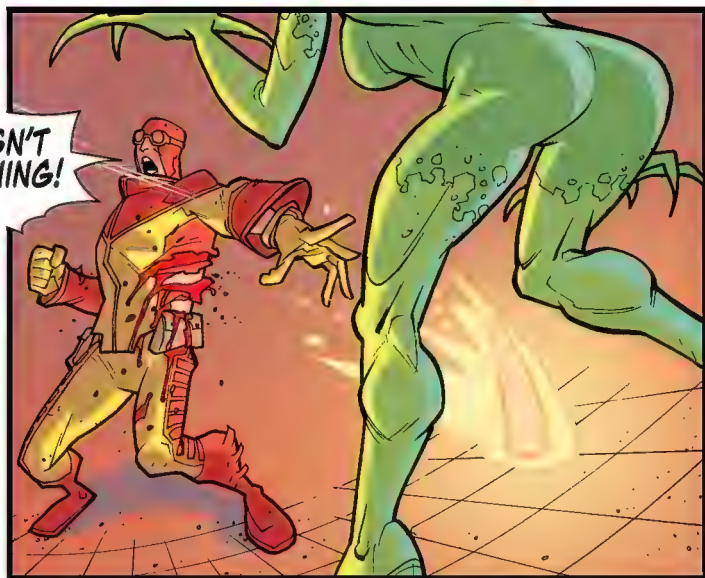
I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU PAY!



YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE?



DESSERT!





BACK IN DEEP SPACE.



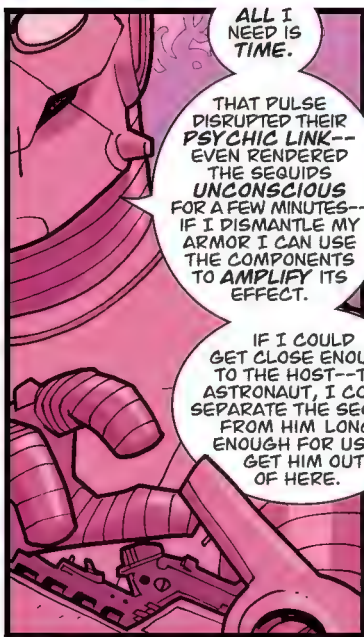
UNGH.

ARE YOU
OKAY?

NO--THEY'RE
PUSHING AGAINST
THE BARRIER--
THROWING ALL THEIR
WEIGHT AGAINST IT--
I DON'T KNOW HOW
MUCH LONGER
I CAN KEEP
IT UP.

THIS ISN'T
WORKING--
I'VE JUST PUT
US IN A WORSE
SITUATION.

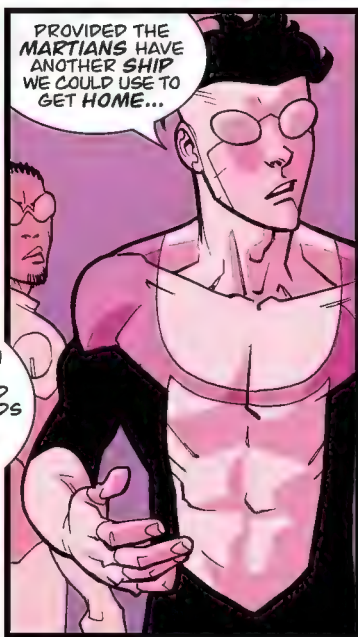
NO.



ALL I
NEED IS
TIME.

THAT PULSE
DISRUPTED THEIR
PSYCHIC LINK--
EVEN RENDERED
THE SEQUIDS
UNCONSCIOUS
FOR A FEW MINUTES--
IF I DISMANTLE MY
ARMOR I CAN USE
THE COMPONENTS
TO AMPLIFY ITS
EFFECT.

IF I COULD
GET CLOSE ENOUGH
TO THE HOST--THE
ASTRONAUT, I COULD
SEPARATE THE SEQUIDS
FROM HIM LONG
ENOUGH FOR US TO
GET HIM OUT
OF HERE.



PROVIDED THE
MARTIANS HAVE
ANOTHER SHIP
WE COULD USE TO
GET HOME...

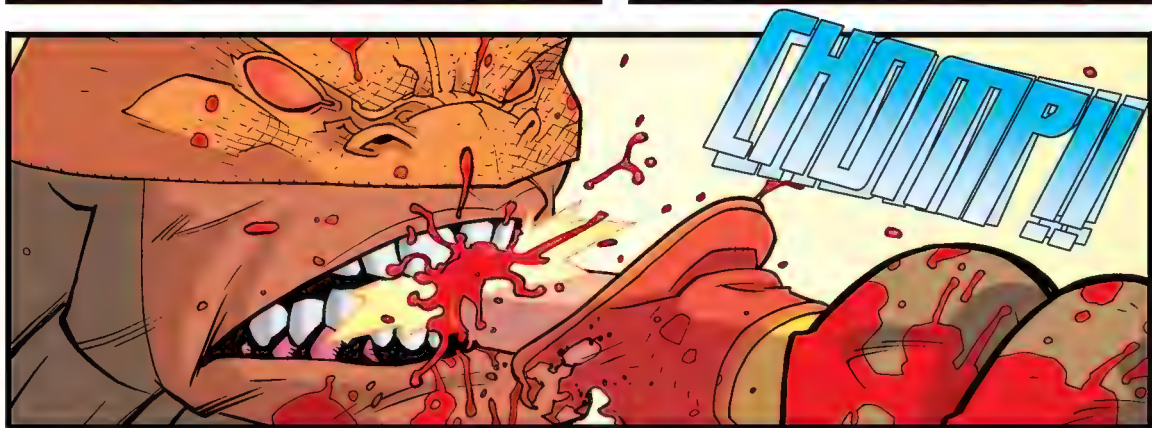
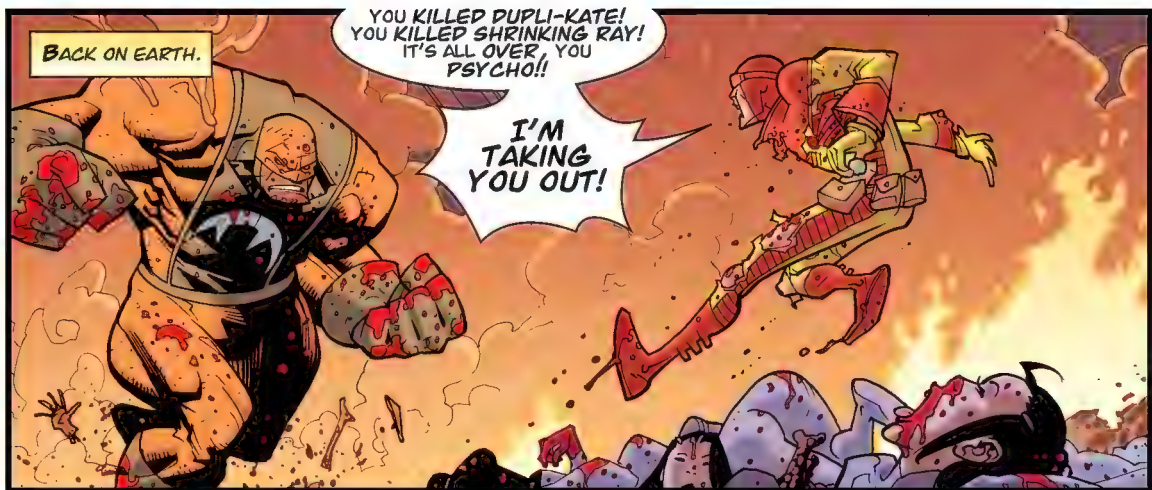


OH--THEY DO--
THEY'VE GOT
HUNDREDS OF
SMALLER SHIPS
IN THIS THING.
THEY'RE IN THE
HANGAR BAY--
LEVEL 84.

THEY USED
TO TAKE MY
SCHOOL ON
TOURS
THROUGH THIS
SHIP--I'VE
MEMORIZED
ALMOST THE
ENTIRE
LAYOUT.

IT WOULD
TAKE US A WHILE
TO GET THERE
FROM HERE--
BUT I KNOW
THE WAY.

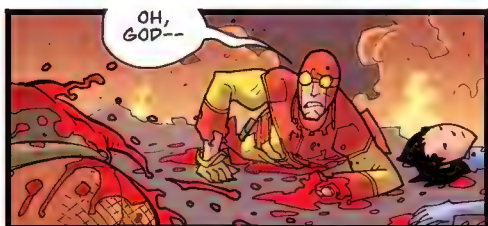
I
THINK.



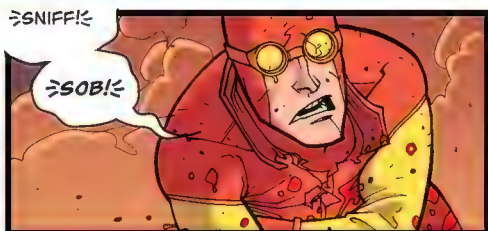
CRASH



WHOO!

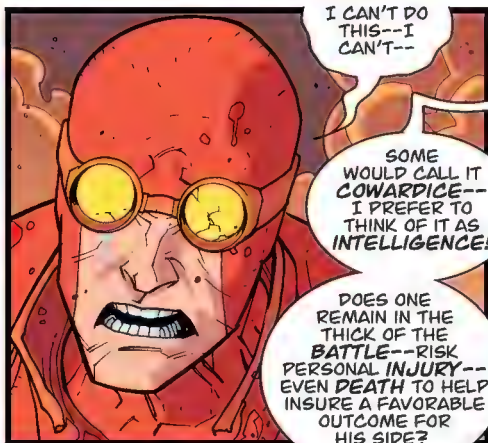


OH, GOD--



SNIFF!

SOB!



I CAN'T DO THIS--I CAN'T--

SOME WOULD CALL IT COWARDICE-- I PREFER TO THINK OF IT AS INTELLIGENCE!

DOES ONE REMAIN IN THE THICK OF THE BATTLE--RISK PERSONAL INJURY-- EVEN DEATH TO HELP INSURE A FAVORABLE OUTCOME FOR HIS SIDE?



OR DOES HE WAIT--IN SAFETY, HIDDEN UNTIL THE BATTLE IS OVER AND THE VICTOR IS EITHER ON YOUR SIDE OR TOO WEARY AND INJURED TO PUT UP MUCH OF A FIGHT?

HOW CAN THAT BE ANYTHING BUT INTELLIGENCE?

...

I SUGGEST YOU SAY A PRAYER.

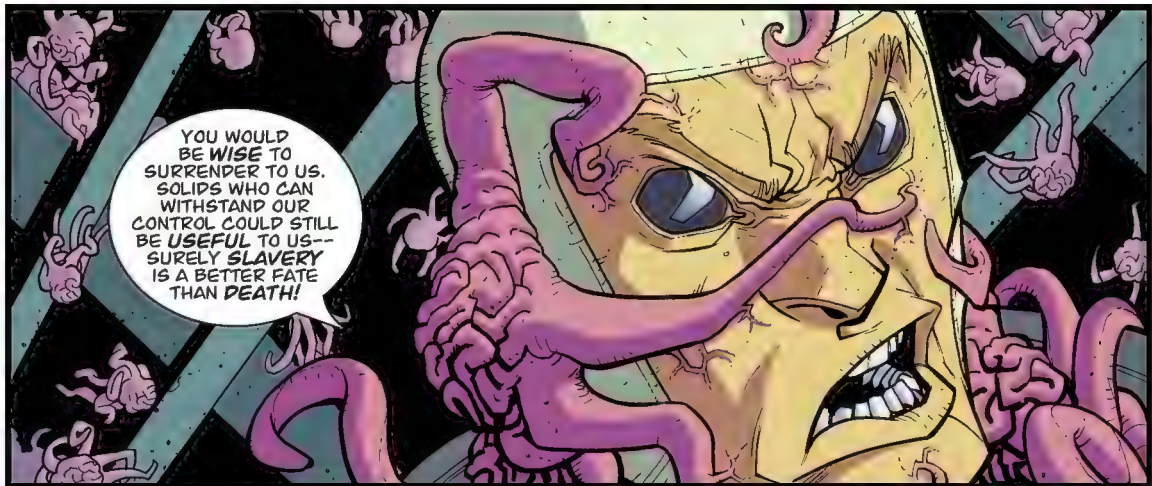


IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL YOUR LITTLE BARRIER COLLAPSES--ALREADY WE FEEL IT BEGINNING TO STRAIN AND BUCKLE UNDER OUR MIGHT!

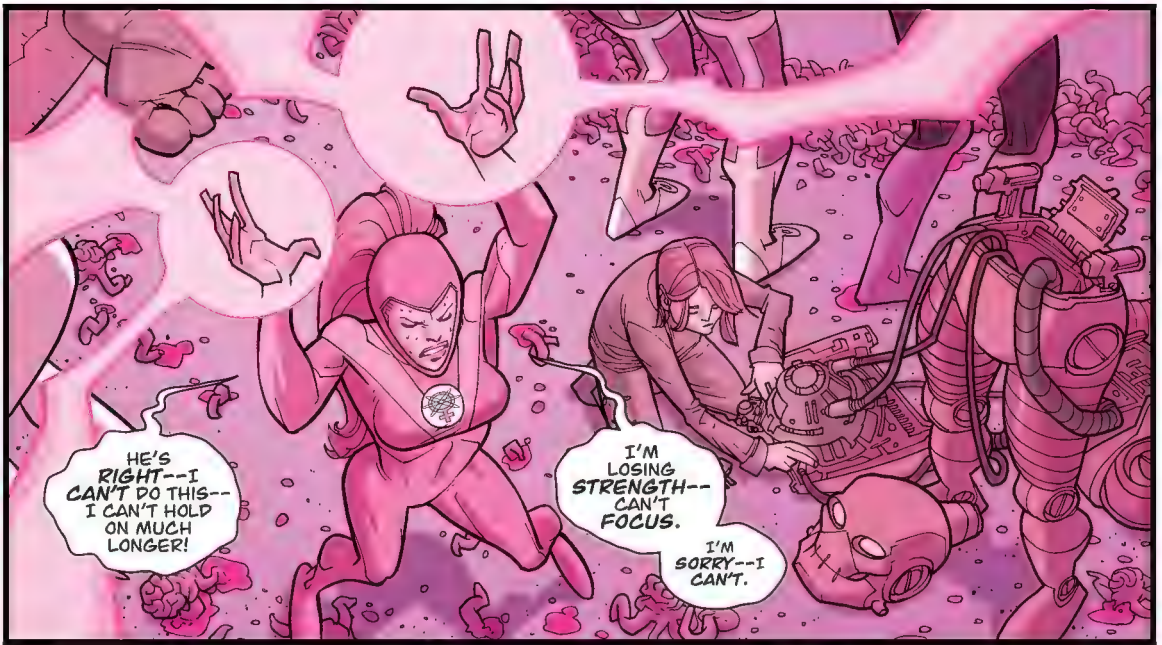
IT IS INEVITABLE, SOLIDS--SOON, WE WILL ARRIVE AT YOUR PLANET--AND MY HOSTILE TAKEOVER WILL BE SUPPEN AND COMPLETE.

WE WILL COMBINE WITH YOUR PEOPLE--TO FORM ONE BEING--ONE RACE. YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS WILL BEND TO OURS--TOGETHER WE WILL EXIST IN GLORIOUS UNITY.

THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO STOP THIS!



YOU WOULD BE WISE TO SURRENDER TO US. SOLIDS WHO CAN WITHSTAND OUR CONTROL COULD STILL BE USEFUL TO US--SURELY SLAVERY IS A BETTER FATE THAN DEATH!



HE'S
RIGHT--I
CAN'T DO THIS--
I CAN'T HOLD
ON MUCH
LONGER!

I'M
LOSING
STRENGTH--
CAN'T
FOCUS.

I'M
SORRY--I
CAN'T.

JUST HOLD IT
TOGETHER LONG
ENOUGH FOR
ROBOT TO FINISH
HIS DEVICE--
HE'LL BE DONE
SOON.

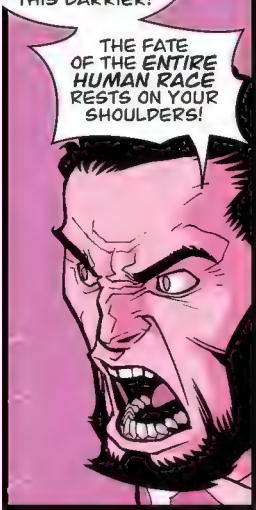
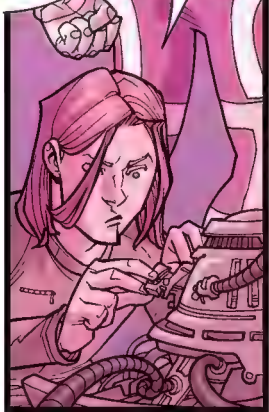
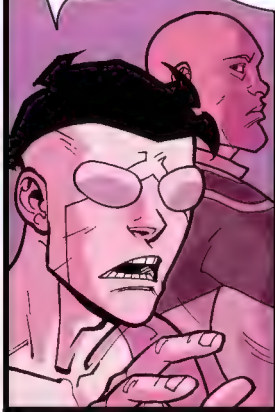
HE'S OUT OF HIS
PROTECTIVE SUIT--
IF YOU LET THE DOME
COLLAPSE NOW THEY'LL
BE ABLE TO ATTACH
TO HIM. HE WON'T
BE ABLE TO
FINISH.

FIVE
MINUTES--
ALL I NEED
IS FIVE
MINUTES.

I COMMAND
YOU TO MAINTAIN
THIS BARRIER!

THE FATE
OF THE ENTIRE
HUMAN RACE
RESTS ON YOUR
SHOULDERS!

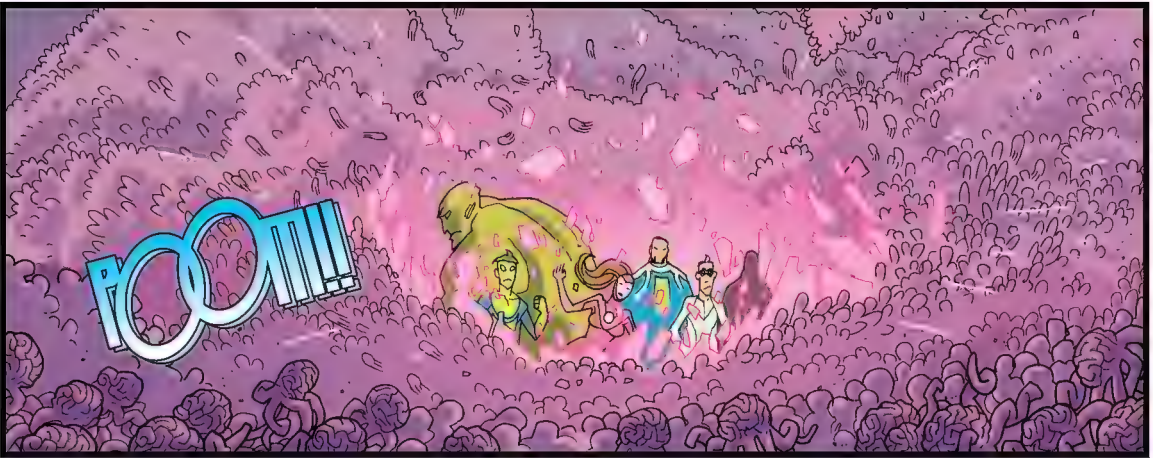
YEAH--THAT'S
ALL SHE NEEDS--
MORE PRESSURE.
GOOD IDEA.



JUST TRY
YOUR BEST--IF
YOU CAN'T--WE'LL
FIGURE SOMETHING
OUT. I PROMISE--
BUT PLEASE, KEEP
IT UP AS LONG AS
YOU CAN.

I
CAN--I
WILL--

I
JUST--





CHAPTER SIX





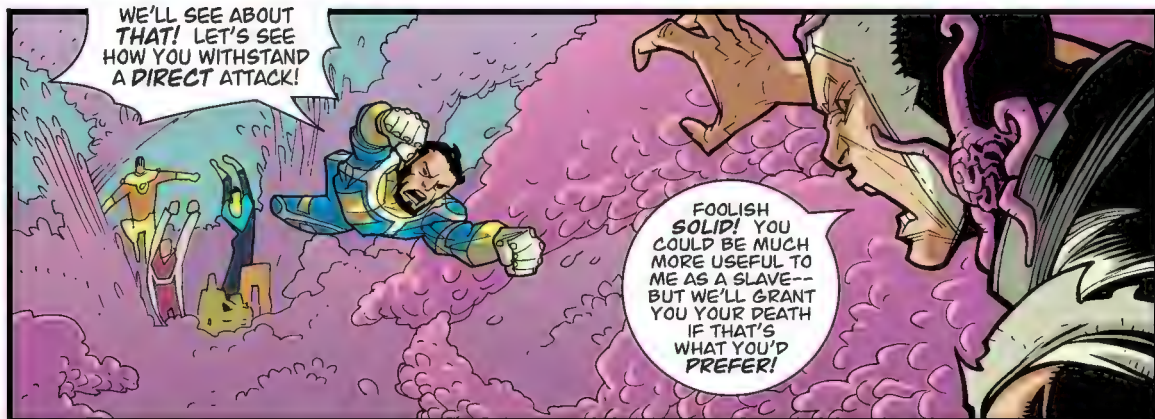
THIS IS NOT GOOD!

I NEED TIME--I'M ALMOST DONE! SOMEONE NEEDS TO DO SOMETHING!



I DO NOT KNOW WHAT YOU ARE CONSTRUCTING BUT I ASSURE YOU--IT WON'T BE COMPLETED IN TIME. AND WERE IT COMPLETED I DOUBT IT COULD DO ANY DAMAGE--I'M TOO POWERFUL NOW.

I CAN'T BE STOPPED!



WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT! LET'S SEE HOW YOU WITHSTAND A DIRECT ATTACK!

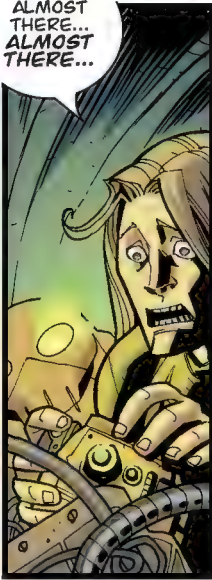
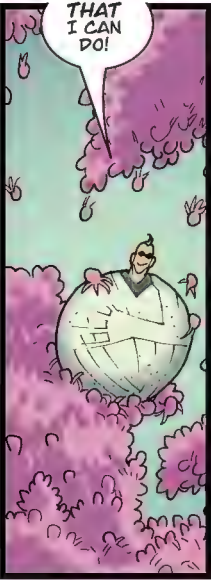
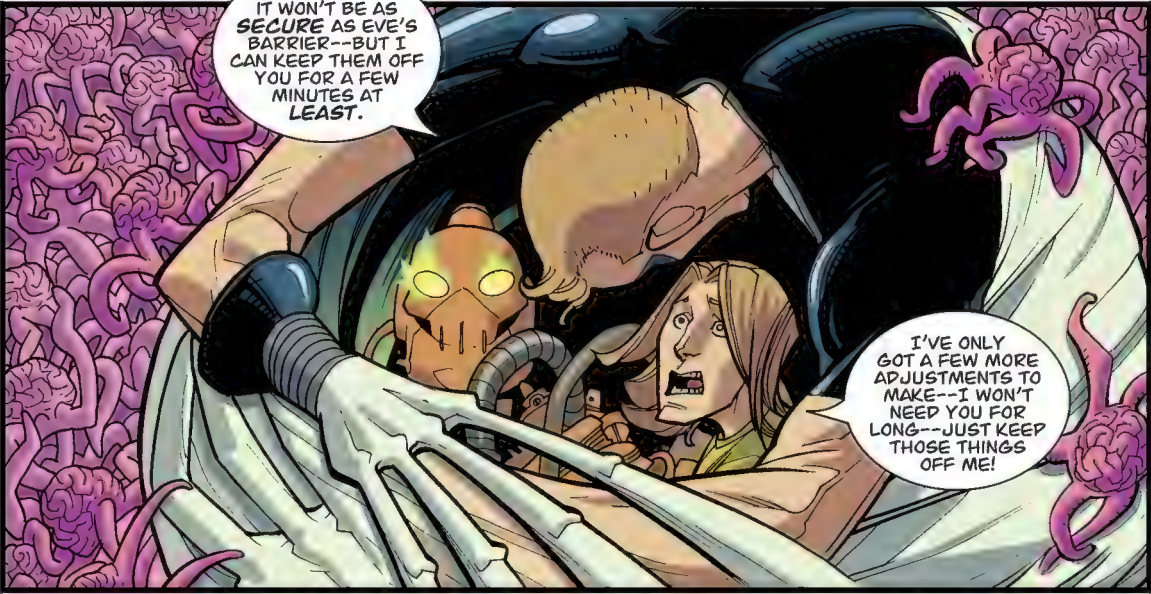
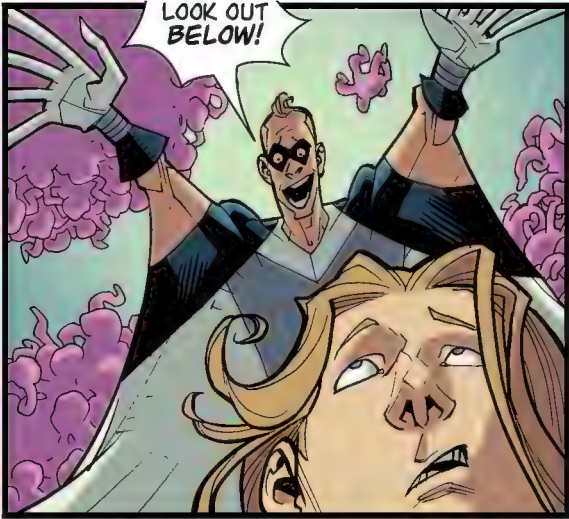
FOOLISH SOLID! YOU COULD BE MUCH MORE USEFUL TO ME AS A SLAVE-- BUT WE'LL GRANT YOU YOUR DEATH IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'D PREFER!



WE'VE GOT TO HOLD THEM BACK! WE'VE GOT TO KEEP THEM AWAY FROM ROBOT!

WE'VE GOT TO BEAT HIM--THERE'S JUST TOO MUCH AT STAKE!

THROKK!!



SOMEONE WANT TO TAKE THIS THING?! HE SAYS YOU JUST NEED TO GET CLOSE TO HIM AND PRESS THE BUTTON.

ANYONE?

ME!

GIVE IT TO ME!



HOW DARE Y--

STOP! I'M DOING THIS! I'M STRONGER THAN YOU! I'M FASTER THAN YOU!

THIS IS TOO IMPORTANT TO LET YOUR EGO GET IN THE WAY!

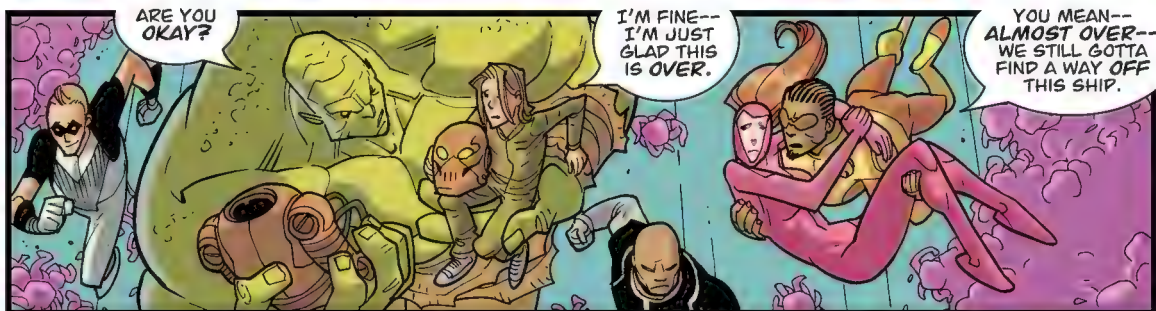


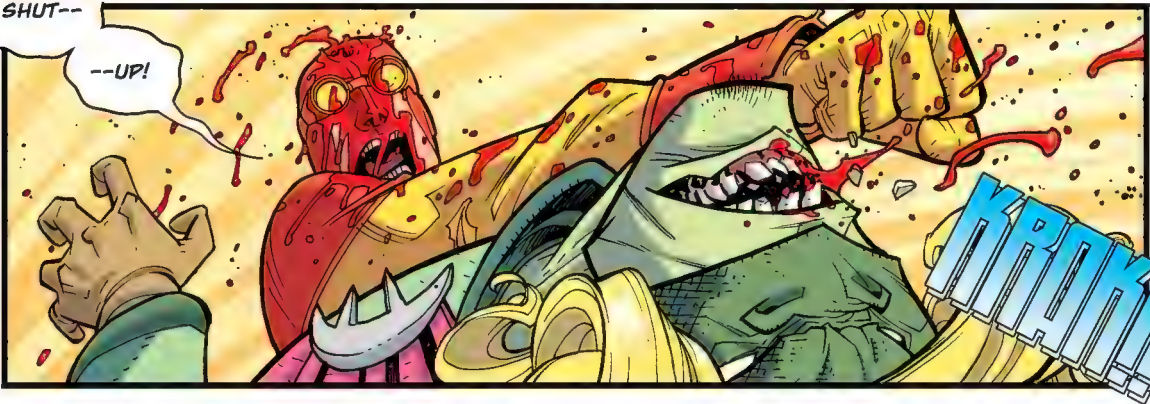
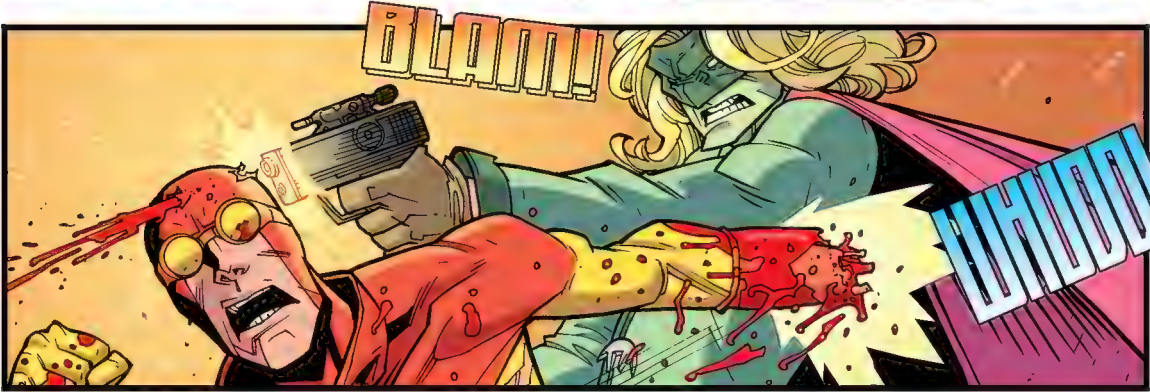
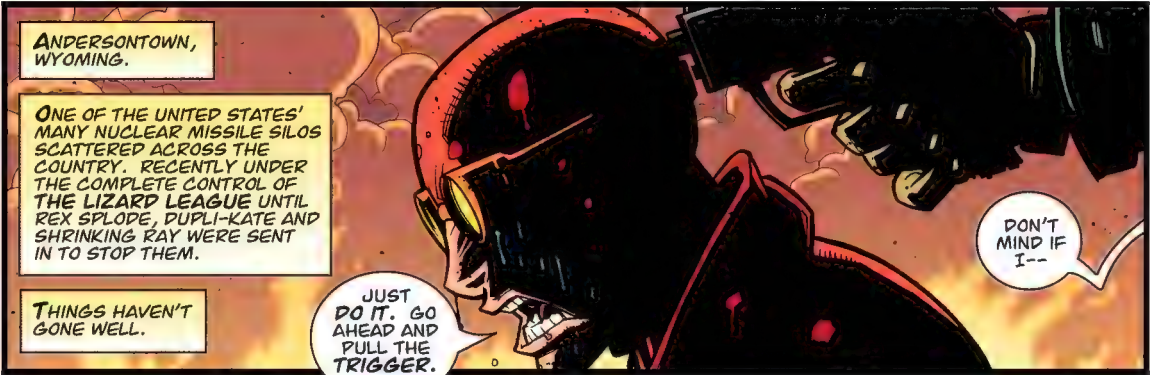
WHAT IS THIS?

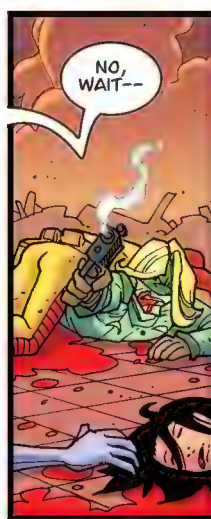
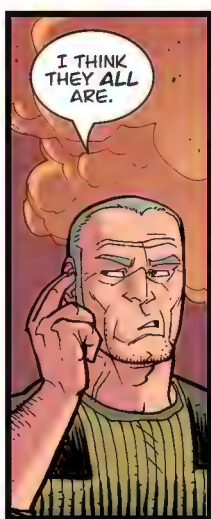
ANOTHER FOOL READY TO DIE?













BACK IN DEEP SPACE.

THROUGH HERE!

THE HANGAR IS RIGHT THROUGH THESE DOORS!



HALT!

YOU HAVE RESTORED MY RULE OVER MY PEOPLE-- AND FOR THAT, I AM GRATEFUL AND WILL FOREVER BE IN YOUR DEBT. FOR THAT YOU WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED.

BUT YOU WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO LEAVE WITH THE GREAT BETRAYER AMONG YOU. HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS GREAT SHAME THRUST UPON OUR PEOPLE.

HE WILL REMAIN HERE WITH US.



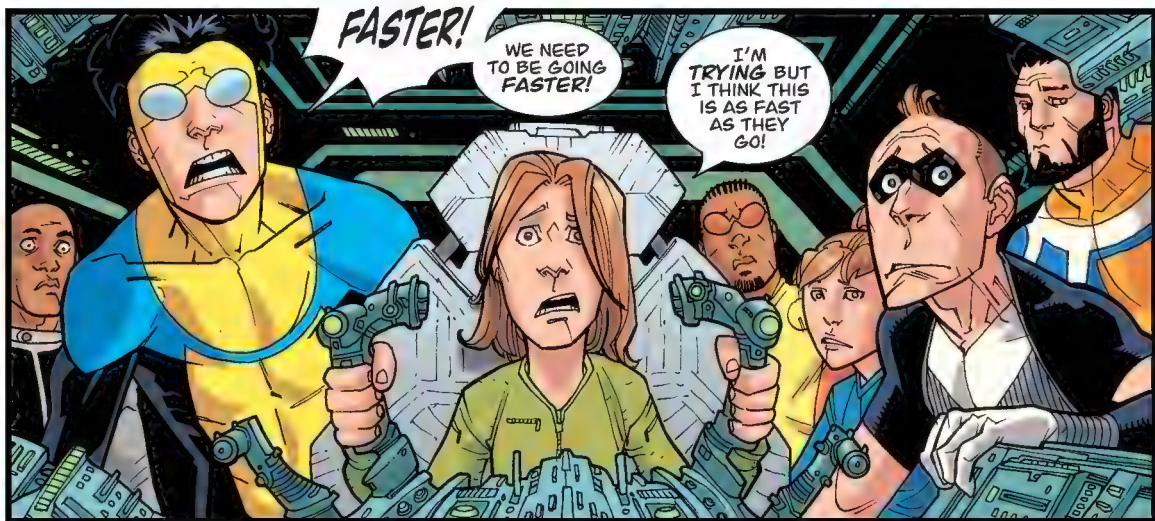
WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO TO HIM?



HE WILL BE EXECUTED.

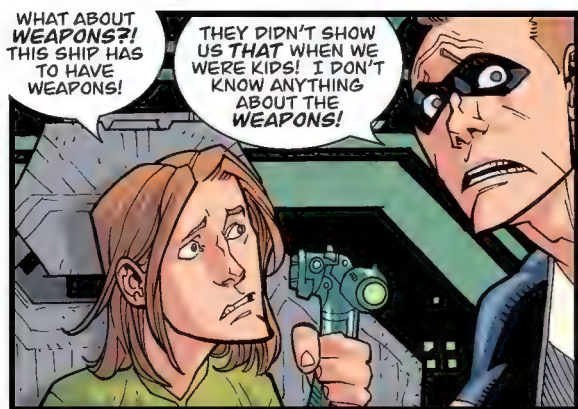


EXECUTED?!

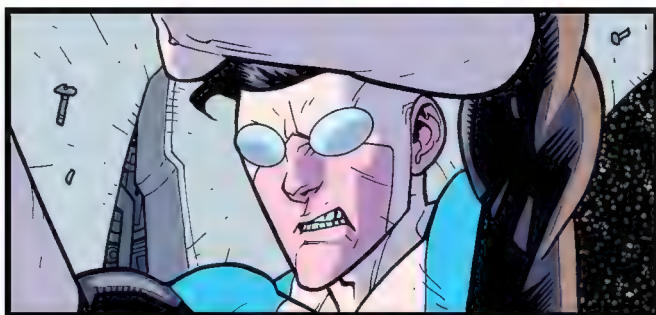
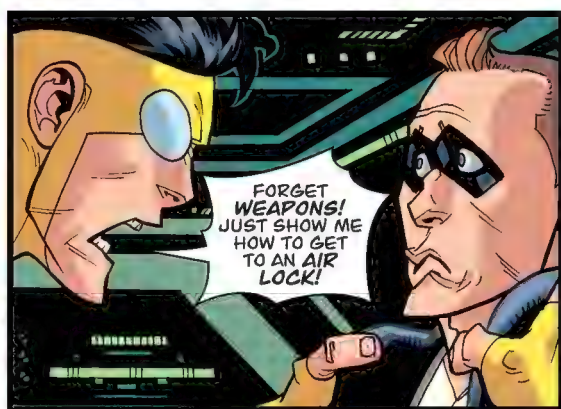


WHAT ABOUT
WEAPONS?!
THIS SHIP HAS
TO HAVE
WEAPONS!

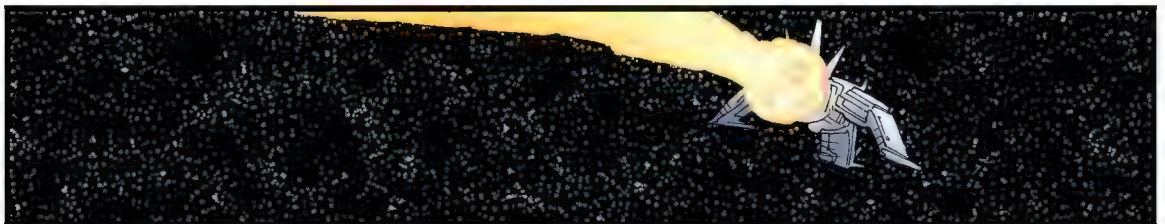
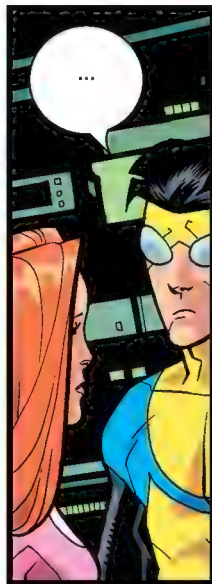
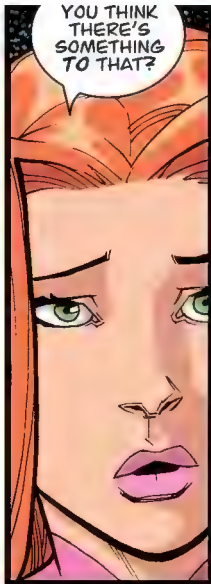
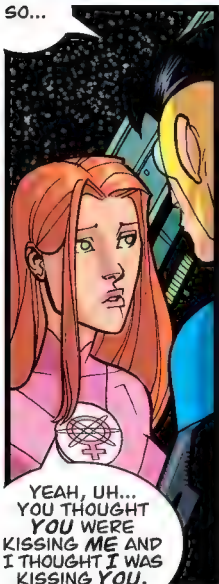
THEY DIDN'T SHOW
US THAT WHEN WE
WERE KIDS! I DON'T
KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT THE
WEAPONS!

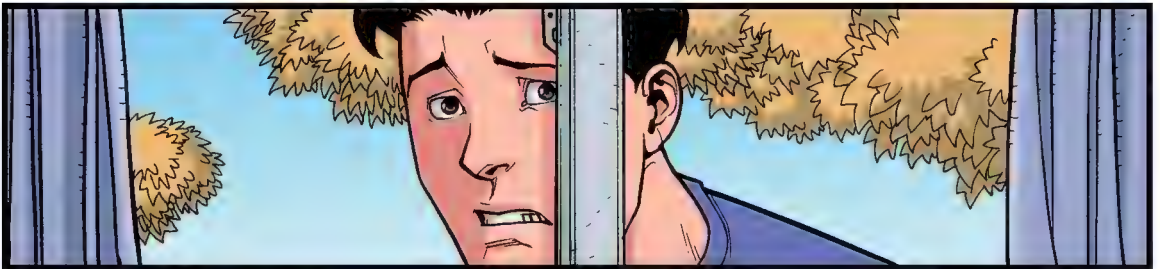
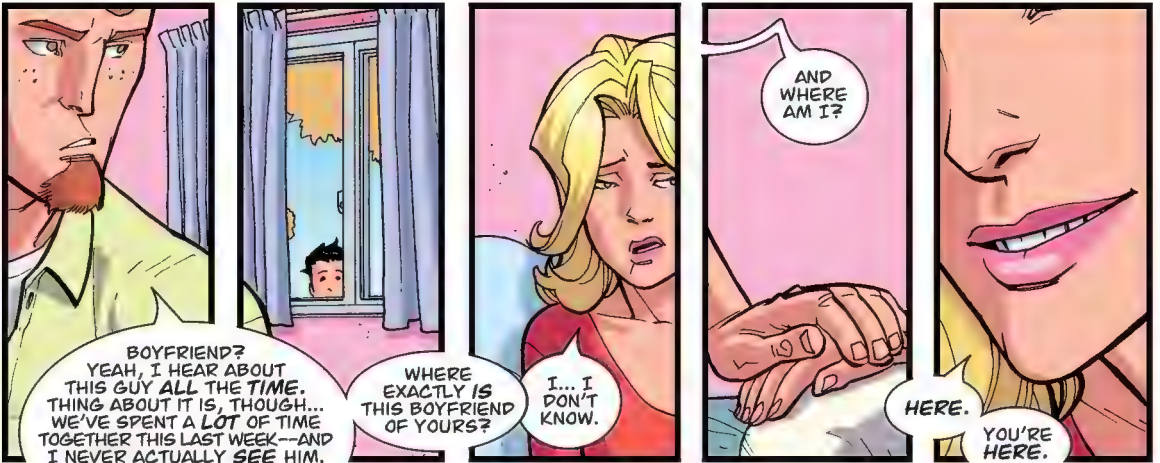
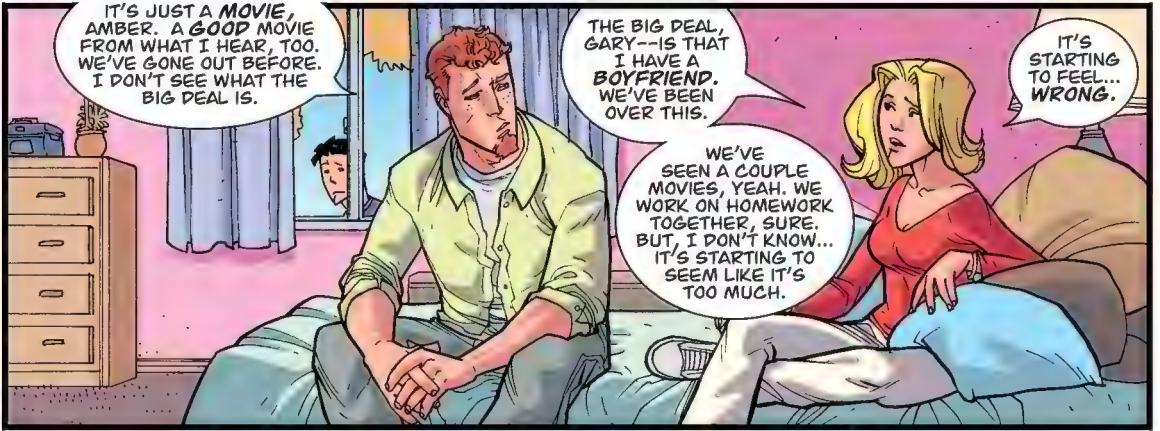
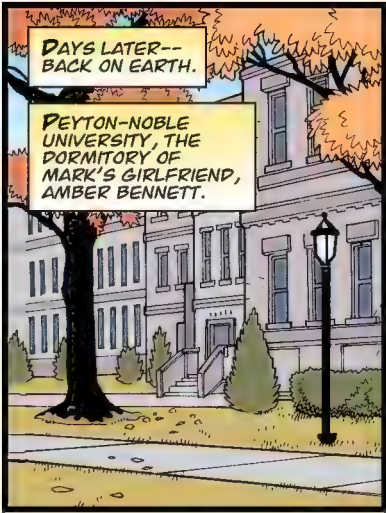


FORGET
WEAPONS!
JUST SHOW ME
HOW TO GET
TO AN AIR
LOCK!









UTAH, THE HIDDEN ROCKY MOUNTAINS BASE OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE.

A FEW HOURS AFTER THE FUNERAL OF DUPLI-KATE.



YOU WERE SO HAPPY, MAN--I JUST-- I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, IMMORTAL.

I'M SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS.



IT'S NOTHING I HAVEN'T EXPERIENCED BEFORE. NOTHING I'M NOT USED TO.

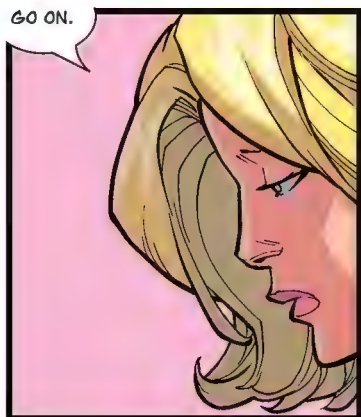
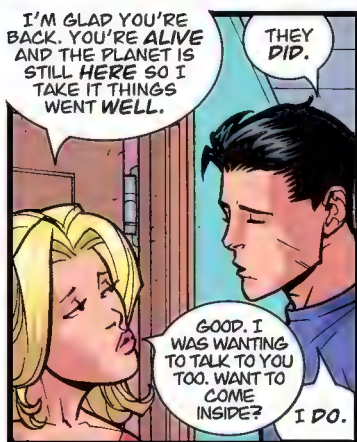
IT'S JUST-- THE THING THAT BOTHERS ME THE MOST--HER AGE--SHE WAS SO YOUNG--

I DIDN'T KNOW I'D LOSE HER SO SOON.



I THOUGHT WE WOULD HAVE MORE TIME TOGETHER.





I'M ALWAYS ZIPPING OFF SOMEWHERE TO DO SOMETHING IMPORTANT. HECK--I'VE EVEN BEEN LEAVING THE PLANET A BUNCH LATELY. AND I'VE REALIZED I JUST EXPECT YOU TO ACCEPT THAT. I'M SAVING THE WORLD--I'M DOING ALL THIS GREAT STUFF--YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY TO SIT AROUND WAITING FOR ME.

YOU CAN'T BE MAD AT ME FOR DOING THIS STUFF BECAUSE THAT WOULD MAKE YOU A SELFISH PERSON.

BUT THAT'S NOT FAIR TO YOU. YOU'RE A PERSON--YOU'VE GOT FEELINGS. IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT I'M THIS SUPERHERO--AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THAT GOING IN.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO JUST ACCEPT THAT I'M NOT GOING TO BE HERE MOST OF THE TIME. WHY SHOULD YOU?

I JUST-- I THINK YOU WOULD BE HAPPIER WITHOUT ME-- WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

I CAME TO THE WINDOW EARLIER--I SAW YOU IN HERE WITH GARY. I KNOW YOU DIDN'T CHEAT ON ME OR ANYTHING--AND THAT'S COOL--BUT IT'S CLEAR TO ME THAT YOU'D BE HAPPIER WITH HIM. AND THAT'S TOTALLY COOL, TOO.

I'VE ACTUALLY-- I THINK YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT EVE. SHE DOES LIKE ME--AND I DON'T KNOW--I MIGHT, Y'KNOW, PURSUE THAT.

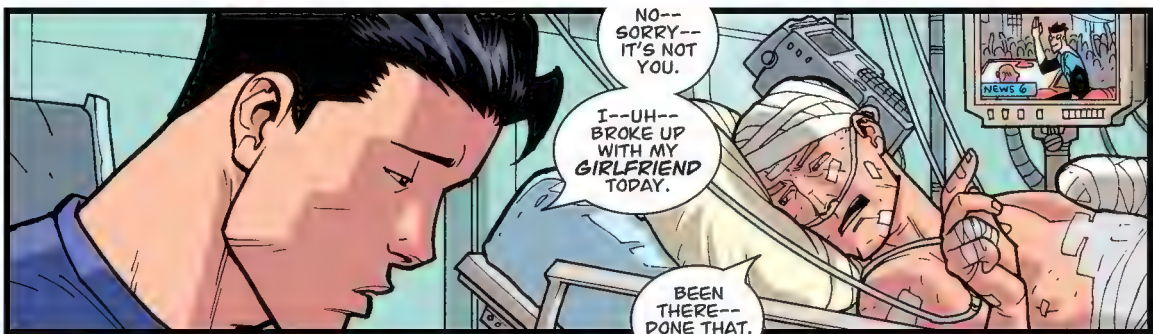
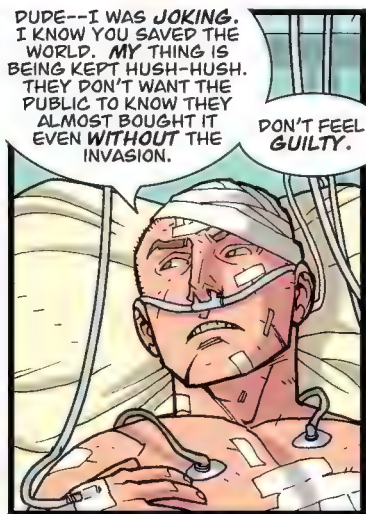
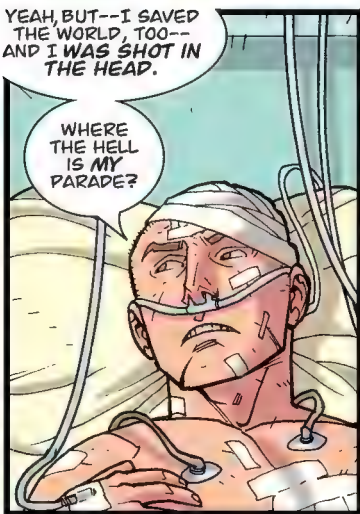
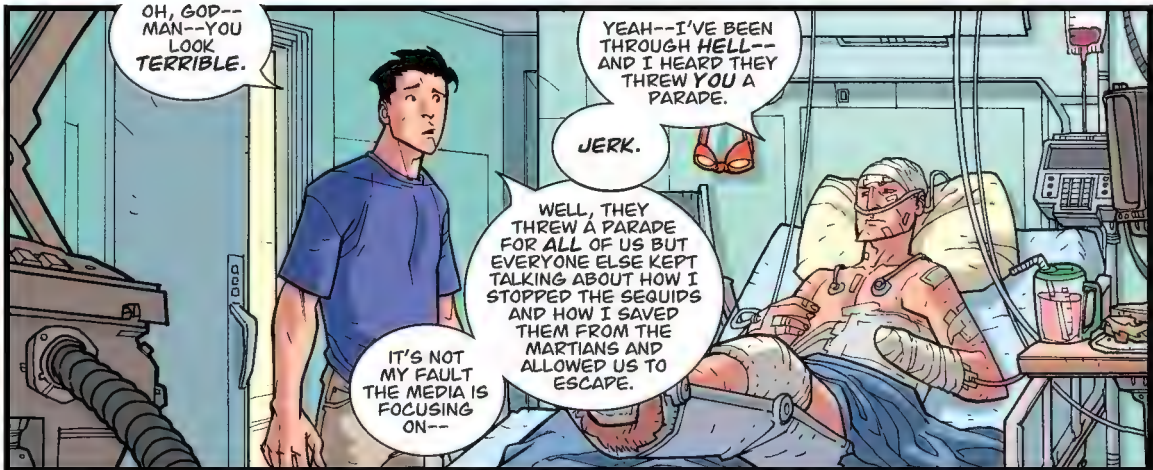
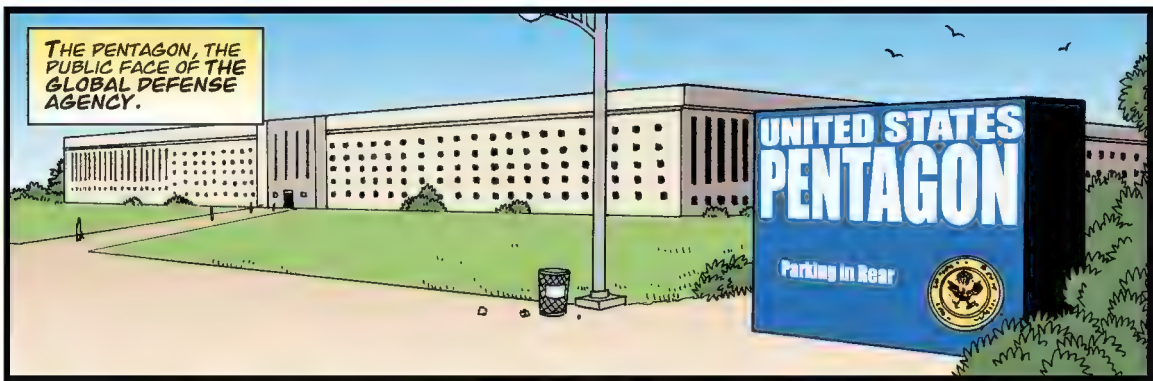
OKAY.

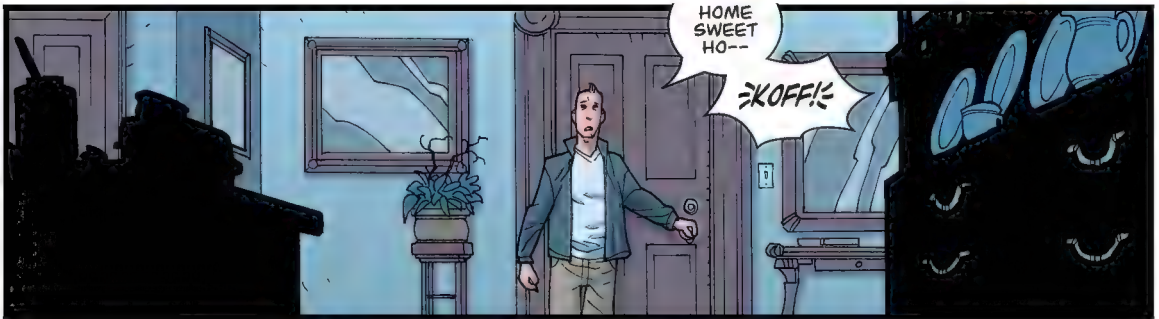
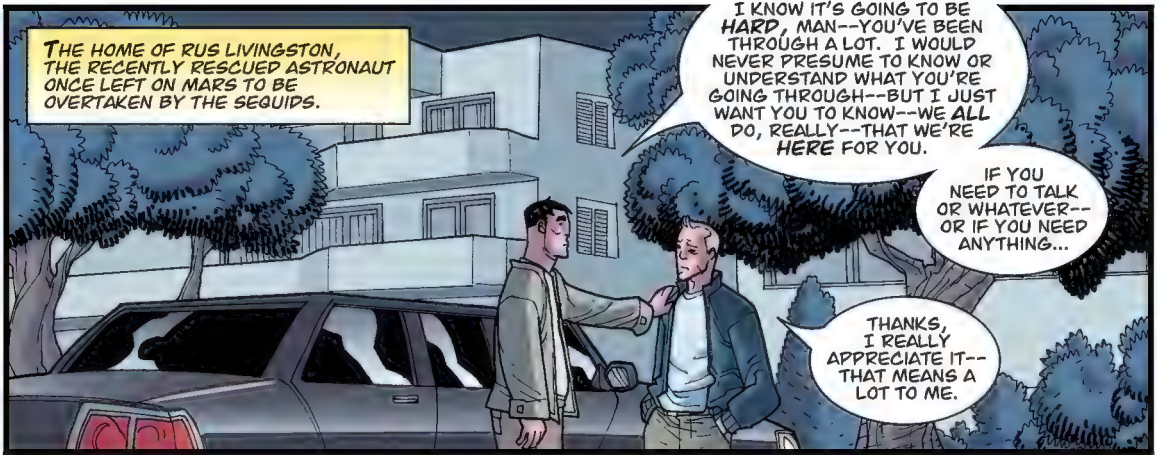
OKAY? THAT'S IT?
WHAT DID YOU WANT TO SAY TO ME?

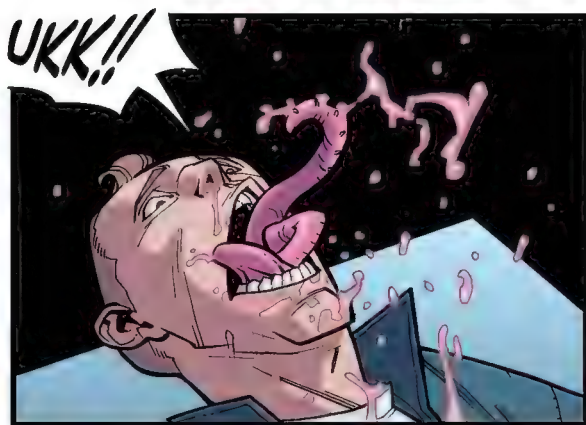
EVERY SINGLE THING YOU JUST SAID TO ME... SERIOUSLY--ALL OF IT. I PROMISE.
EXCEPT FOR THAT PART ABOUT EVE AT THE END.

WELL-- THAT'S A RELIEF.

I DID MISS YOU A BUNCH, THOUGH.
ONE LAST CUDDLE?
SURE.









SKETCHBOOK

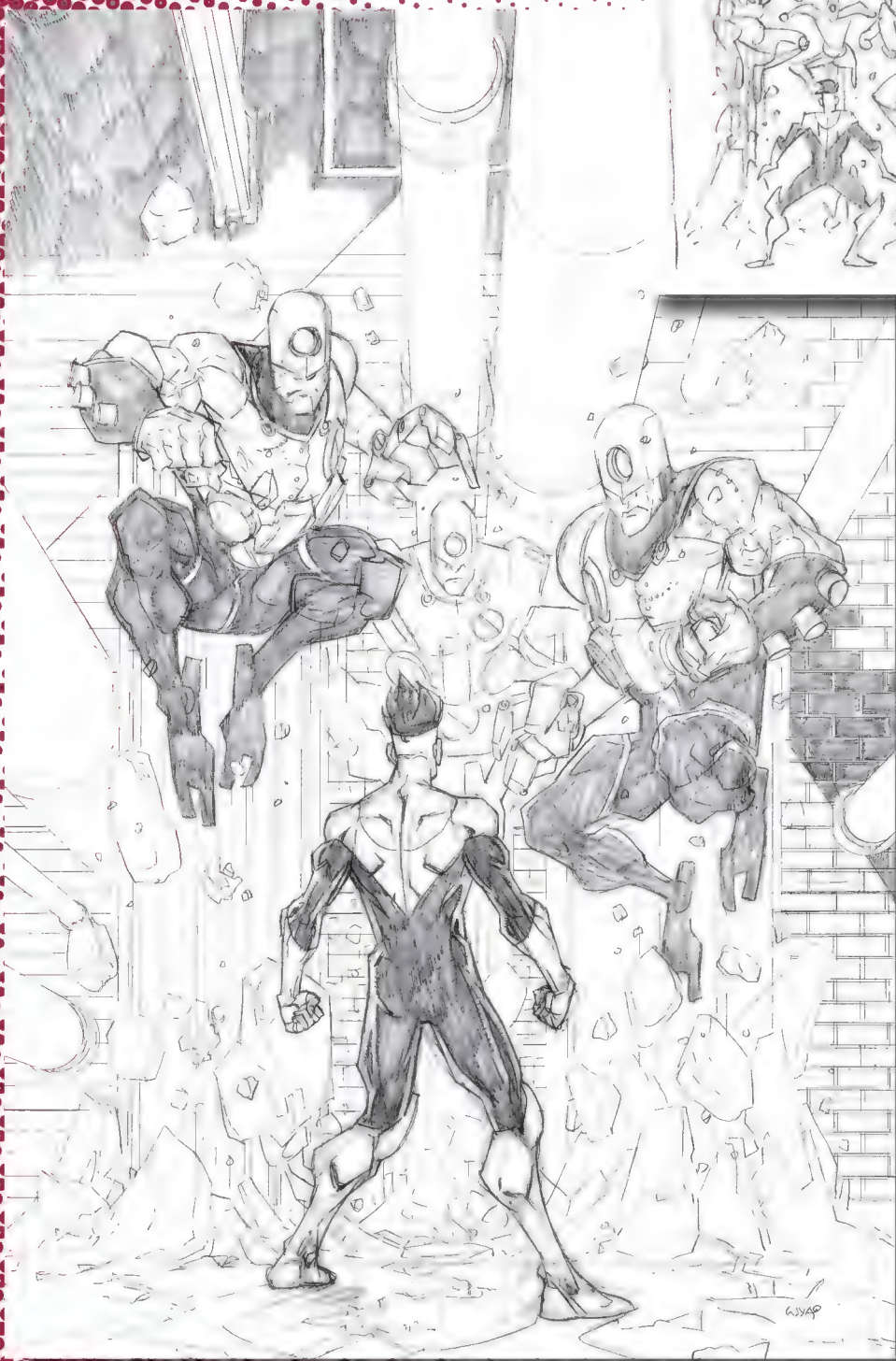


Welcome to another installment of the Invincible trade paperback sketchbook section. Here we have my layout for the cover to this volume and Ryan's sketch. I believe Ryan did his first and then my sketch was a tweak on his design. But I don't exactly recall, so luckily, we've got a special treat this volume - young Ryan Ottley is going to be participating in rambling on about these sketches. Ryan will appear in italics. So Ryan, what do you think?

I think you are too nice letting me speak, I might make us both look dumb. Anyway this was my favorite trade cover to work on so far. It took a couple thumbnail sketches to get it down. You asked me to have the Sequids flow down diagonally, but in my sketch, I kinda took my own liberties and it just wasn't what you were after. So on the final, I kept a diagonal flow and I just had fun with it. I'm happy with how it turned out.

On the following page you'll find the final pencils to the TPB cover.





On this page we have Ryan's layout and pencils for the cover to issue 36. I'll be honest, I prefer the figure in the sketch a great deal more than the one in the final piece. I asked Ryan to make it look like Mark was more determined and ready to fight than startled. So, I screwed it up.

Yeah, I got complaints from readers saying they didn't like the hair. So I guess we both are screw-ups. It's how I envisioned it though, a gust of wind from those Reanimen busting out of the ground.



Sketches and pencils for the cover to 37 grace this page. I gotta say, this is one of my favorite covers for the series--I just love it.

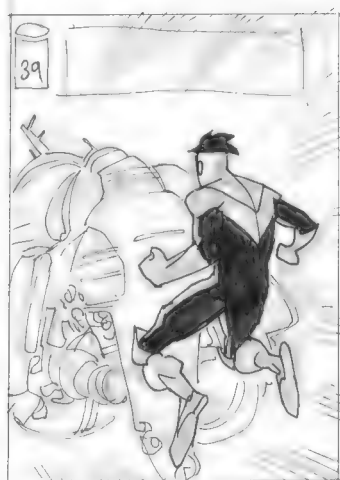
The punch for this cover just had to feel powerful. I did my best, while drawing it I cranked up the head-bangin music, but of course withheld the actual head banging so I could draw steady, and I like how it turned out, I spent more time on the thumbnail sketches also, finishing them all the way to inks, which is rare. I usually like to get on with it and get to the main cover already, but those small sketches were just too much fun. Yeah I kinda enjoy my job.





Here you'll see the sketches and final pencils for issue 38's cover. I love how menacing Ryan made this dude look--and he's still really just an astronaut. Great cover.

Thanks Robert. Ya know I miss drawing those Sequids, waves of them floppin around, I bet I drew thousands of them. We should do a contest, how many sequids in this story arc?!? And then we just randomly pick a winner because niether Robert or I wants to count the actual amount of Sequids for real. Or we could get Crabtree to count them, keep that boy busy.



Here begins the long process of the cover for 39. I asked Ryan to design a ship that was the size of a city, a tall order to ask of someone who may possibly have to draw the ship multiple times. I have no limit to my respect for Ryan, due to the fact that he did not skimp on the design at all.

It was a pretty time-consuming cover. I did start with the sketches, but when I got to the actual cover, I needed to draw the ship coming at you. That's when I realized the front of the ship I designed is pretty boring when it's coming straight at you. I decided to just draw a new ship right on the main cover. My first try is that one with the bunny on top - the bunny was added AFTER I decided to scrap the cover. My friend Derek was there and he informed me it wasn't very dynamic and that it would be MORE dynamic if I chose a slightly turned view of the ship. So after yelling and swearing at him, I drew the bunny on top and chucked it across the room and started again - this time trying a little harder and just making it up as I go along.

Finished pencils for the cover to 39... it's a doozie.

Doozie. Yes. I think from design to finish it took me 4 days to complete. Two days on the final cover, and two days on the designs. It was a little too much time to spend on a cover I think.





Here is the sketch and final pencils for issue 40's cover. I think this one turned out just swell.

I think you're swell.

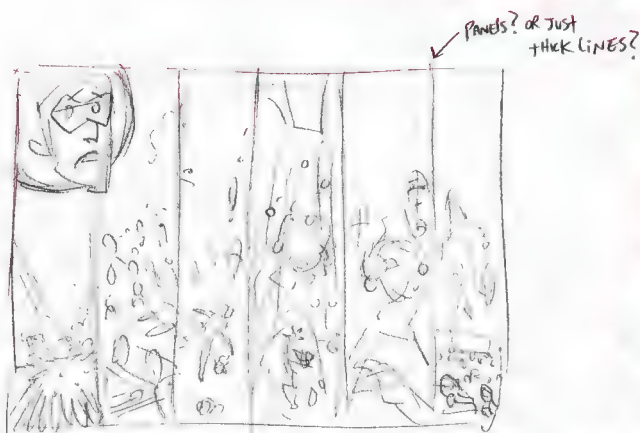
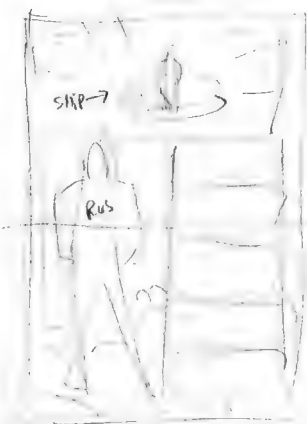
I agree with you and take back my previous comment.



Pencils for the cover to 41. No sketch for this one folks, I think Ryan just went straight to the board. It's also the only time you see the parade in issue 41, aside from one small bit.

And I'm thankful I didn't have to draw a parade in the book. Drawing a parade is about as fun as being at one.

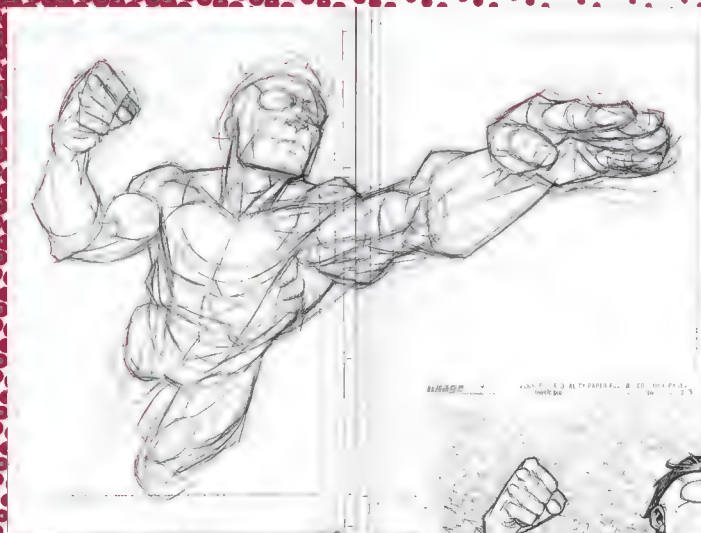
Heh, I too hate being at parades. You know, I gotta say... I hate parades in general. I hate watching them, thinking about them, hearing about them... why in the heck does anyone throw a parade? Does anyone enjoy them? Why did I even ever consider putting one in this book?



Random page layouts and an awesome sketch of Invincible getting punched by a Reaniman. This sketch was done for a person who bought a metric ton of original art from Ryan. Where could someone who was interested purchase similar art, Ryan?

Well Robert, I'm glad you asked. Splashpageart.com, for all your original art needs.



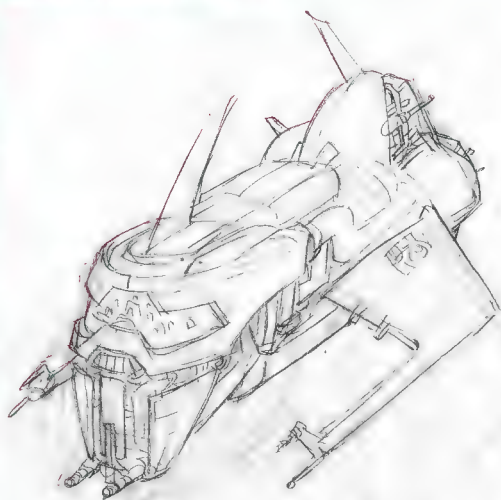


This is the art for pages 2 and 3 of issue 36, which was also used as a poster. It was originally conceived as a poster, and I decided to use it as pages too--because I really wanted the scene to appear in the book. Since it was such a complicated piece, I got Ryan to start working on it months before it was to appear in an issue, good thing too... I imagine it wasn't too easy to draw.

Not the easiest, no. The perspective grid alone took me a day to nail down, from then on it's just draw a million little buildings. I don't know exactly how long it took since I worked on it off and on. I should start tracing this stuff.

On the following page you'll see Bill's final colors for the poster version, which differ slightly from the one in the book. The Invincible figure is fully rendered.

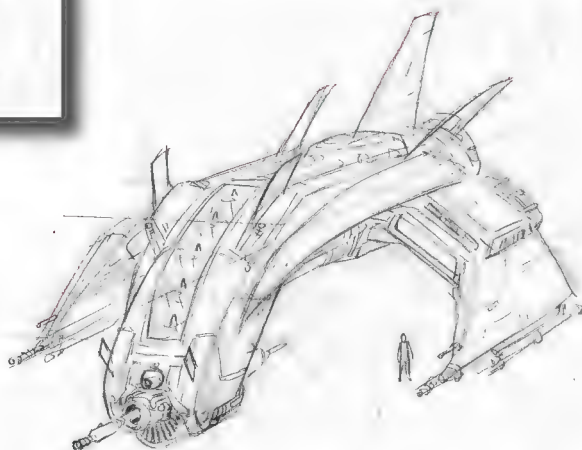




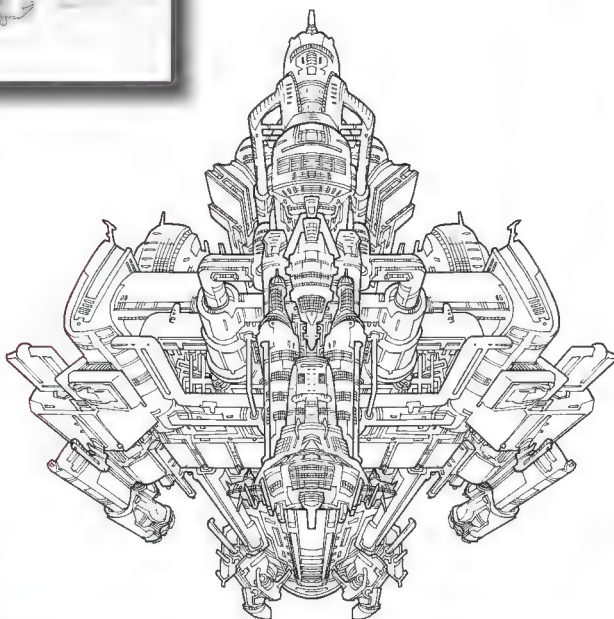
MARTIAN TRANSPORT
WITH WEAPONS CAPABILITIES

Some Martian ship designs from Ryan. I had no input here... I just told Ryan to go crazy.

I don't get many chances to design ships. I enjoyed the hell out of it. I gotta do more of this more often. MORE space scenes Robert!



MARTIAN FIGHTER





And here we see some of Cory's sketches done around the time of these issues. Just some random odds and ends Cory did in his free time. Is that drawing of Oliver a sign of things to come? Only time will tell, dear reader. Until next time.

-Robert Kirkman

Speaking of Cory Walker. I just gotta plug his blog online. www.corenthal.blogspot.com, I check it daily for all my Walker needs. Oh and I also have a blog at www.ryanottley.com, but I'm not as diligent in updating as Cory is. Check them out folks! See ya later.

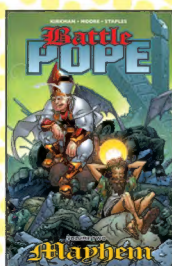
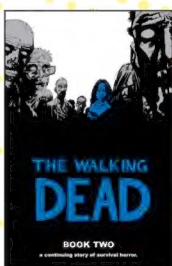
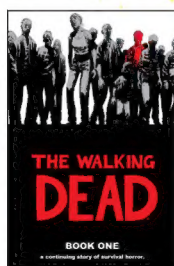
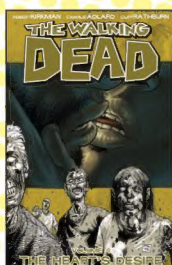
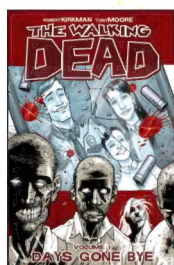
-Ryan Ottley

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